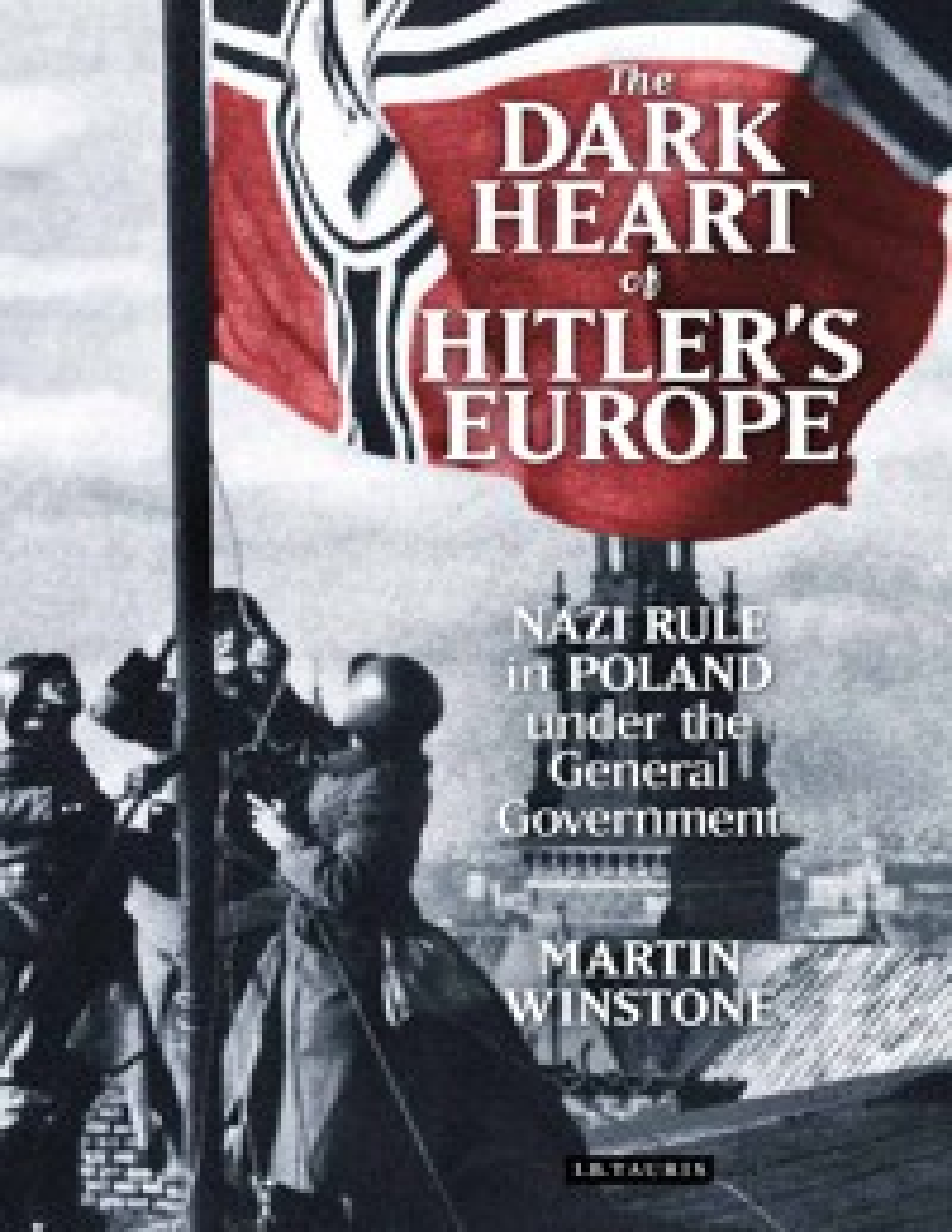
The DARK HEART of HITLER'S EUROPE

NAZI RULE in POLAND under the General Government

MARTIN WINSTONE



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Contents

List of illustrations
Acknowledgements
List of abbreviations
Notes on place names and sources
Introduction: ‘The Wild East’
1 ‘The Devil’s work’: Origins
2 ‘Gangster Gau’: The regime
3 ‘Gentlemen, we are not murderers’: Early measures
4 ‘Something big is coming’: Barbarossa
5 ‘The second war’: Everyday life
6 ‘That accursed year’: Aktion Reinhard
7 ‘The crying of the children’: Ethnic cleansing
8 ‘The blood of fighting Poland’: Resistance
9 ‘Herr Roosevelt’s list’: Collapse
Epilogue: ‘A study of human madness’
Notes
Bibliography
Plates

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Illustrations

Maps

The division of Poland, autumn 1939
The General Government, 1942

Plates

1 Rivals in crime: Heinrich Himmler and Hans Frank. (*United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, courtesy of Muzeum Historii Fotografii Krakowskiego Towarzystwa Fotograficznego*)
2 Odilo Globocnik. (*© United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, courtesy of Geoffrey Giles*)
3 Women are led to their execution at Palmiry. (*© Narodowe Archiwum Cyfrowe*)
4 Kraków's Jews are forced into the ghetto, March 1941. (*United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, courtesy of Archiwum Państwowe w Krakowie*)
5 Ukrainian nationalists greet Frank in Lwów, August 1941. (*© Narodowe Archiwum Cyfrowe*)
6 Soviet prisoners of war in the Dęblin camp. (*United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, courtesy of National Archives and Records Administration, College Park*)
7 German troops in Warsaw guard Poles seized for labour deportation to the Reich. (*© Narodowe Archiwum Cyfrowe*)

8 A street in the Warsaw ghetto. (*© United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, courtesy of Guenther Schwarberg*)

9 Making Kraków 'free of Jews': a deportation train, probably to Bełżec. (*United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, courtesy of Archiwum Dokumentacji Mechanicznej*)

10 Płaszów forced labour camp. (*© The Wiener Library*)

11 'Such a beautiful young girl, so innocent': Czesława Kwoka. (*© Państwowe Muzeum Auschwitz-Birkenau w Oświęcimiu*)

12 Children are separated from their parents during the Zamość Aktion. (*© Narodowe Archiwum Cyfrowe*)

13 An underground bunker is discovered during the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising. (*United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, courtesy of National Archives and Records Administration, College Park*)

14 Home Army troops with a captured German tank during the Warsaw Uprising. (*© United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, courtesy of Juliusz Bogdan Deczkowski*)

15 Frank in his cell at Nuremberg. (*United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, courtesy of National Archives and Records Administration, College Park*)

16 Warsaw in 1945. The area of the ghetto is in the foreground. (*© United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, courtesy of Juliusz Bogdan Deczkowski*)

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Abbreviations

AK	Home Army
BCh	Peasant Battalions
DG IV	Durchgangsstraße IV
GL	People’s Guard
HSSPF	Higher SS and Police Leader
IdO	Institut für deutsche Ostarbeit
KWC	Directorate of Civil Resistance
NSDAP	National Socialist (Nazi) German Workers’ Party
NSZ	National Armed Forces
Orpo	Order Police
OUN	Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists
PKWN	Polish Committee of National Liberation
PPR	Polish Workers’ Party
PPS	Polish Socialist Party
RGO	Main Welfare Council
RKFDV	Reichskommissar for the Strengthening of Germandom
Sipo	Security Police
SL	People’s Party
SN	National Party
SSPF	SS and Police Leader
SZP	Polish Victory Service
UPA	Ukrainian Insurgent Army
UTsK	Ukrainian Central Committee

ŻOB	Jewish Combat Organization
ZWZ	Union of Armed Struggle

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Notes on place names and sources

As a general rule, Polish names have been used for locations within the General Government and other territories of the prewar Polish state; thus Lwów, for example, rather than L'viv or Lemberg. This is not intended to assert any contemporary political claims but rather to indicate that these sites were legally Polish territory in 1939. The only exceptions are the use of Warsaw and Vistula rather than Warszawa and Wisła, given their near universal usage in the English-speaking world, and the designation of the Nazi concentration camp complex in the Polish town of Oświęcim by its German name of Auschwitz-Birkenau.

In general, published primary sources originally written in Polish, Yiddish or Hebrew have been quoted in English translation where it exists. This is to enable as many readers as possible to explore these texts further should they so desire (and as a result of the author's ignorance of the latter two languages). However, it is acknowledged that such an approach is not without difficulties, most obviously with works published under Communism which were subject to censorship. The reader should also be aware that the English translations of one of the principal sources used in this book, Zygmunt Klukowski's diary, although carried out by the doctor's family, were flawed. (There are also problems, of a different nature, with the published Polish

editions of the diary: the original, *Dziennik z lat okupacji Zamojszczyzny* (1939–1944), ed. Zygmunt Mańkowski (Lublin, 1958), unsurprisingly omitted the post-liberation era and suffered minor politically-motivated edits in other places whilst *Zamojszczyzna*, ed. Agnieszka Knyt, 2 vols. (Warsaw, 2007), does cover the whole wartime period and beyond but has significant cuts to the text.) Similarly, the English translation of Calek Perechodnik's account, and the 1993 Polish first edition from which it was taken, in some cases misrepresented elements of the original text, which has since been published in Polish as *Spowiedź* [Confession], ed. David Engel (Warsaw, 2011). However, all of the quotations from both Klukowski and Perechodnik chosen for use in this book accurately represent the meaning of the Polish originals.

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Maps

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The General Government, 1942

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Introduction
‘The Wild East’

THE SPRING OF 1943 WAS NOT EXACTLY THE MOST PROPITIOUS PERIOD in the history of European tourism, a time when only the most insouciant of travellers would have willingly ventured across a war-ravaged continent. And yet it was the moment chosen by the world’s most famous and respected travel publisher for the release of a new guidebook, a volume that stands as one of the most remarkable documents in the histories of both travel literature and the Second World War.

Baedekers Generalgouvernement was admittedly in some senses a conventional travel guide.[1] There was a strong emphasis on practicalities with much of the text given over to directions to and between the major urban centres of this curiously named territory. For the cities themselves, visitors were provided with copious advice on where and how best to spend their time. In the capital, for example, they could choose from 12 recommended hotels, 18 restaurants and 9 cafes, 2 of them offering a ‘lovely view’ of the central market square. The concerts hosted by a number of these eating places formed just one of many entertainment options alongside theatre, cinema, cabaret, the state philharmonic orchestra and ‘chamber music evenings in the old university and in the town hall’.[2]

Of course, not everywhere could compete with the vibrancy of a capital city. Nonetheless, readers were assured

that there was no lack of cultural and sporting attractions elsewhere. Although dramatic theatre was largely restricted to the largest cities, many towns could entice visitors with variety and cabaret, as well as bars, bookshops and movies. Indeed, so popular was cinema, that readers were advised to book tickets for evening screenings in advance to avoid the crowds. In addition, ‘almost all sports’ were available, ‘above all football, handball, athletics, tennis, horse racing [...], boxing, water sports and winter sports’. Admittedly, museums and art collections were mostly ‘closed during the war’ but a degree of compensation was offered by the fact that guided tours had been established in some cities.[3]

What might visitors have seen on such tours? Like any good guide, especially one bearing the Baedeker imprint, the book offered detailed descriptions of architectural highlights, nowhere more so than for the capital whose ‘numerous churches and monasteries’ were variously, if somewhat repetitively, described as ‘stately’, ‘beautiful’ and ‘splendid’. This does not mean that less familiar destinations were ignored. One of the strengths of *Baedekers Generalgouvernement* was the sheer number of sites recommended, such as the lovely small town of Kazimierz Dolny which was ‘particularly worth seeing’. Nor were ‘the diverse beauties of nature’ omitted, especially in the mountainous regions of the south which accounted for a third of the text of the guide proper. These mountains were also the principal locations of the many health resorts, spas and winter sports centres in which visitors could choose to relax. Those who preferred more vigorous alpine pursuits could enjoy the ‘good hunting grounds’ of the forested foothills in the south-east.[4]

The book did not limit itself to describing attractions, however. In the words of the introduction, it aimed to help

readers (‘not only travellers’) ‘to see the land and people as they really are’. This was, after all, a territory undergoing a process of ‘constant change in so many ways’. Such phrases may be clichés of travel writing yet they appeared to have some substance. Following the well-established Baedeker model, the guide included a series of academic essays covering issues such as the landscape, people and economy of the region and its art. The centrepiece of this section of the book was a lengthy historical chronology of the ‘Vistula space’ from the Ice Age to 26 October 1939, the date of the ‘establishment of the Generalgouvernement under the Governor General Reichsminister Dr. Hans Frank’.[5]

However, the attentive reader would have soon noticed that this was not a typical tourist handbook. One clue was the fact, mentioned in the very first sentence of the introduction, that the idea for the guide had emanated from the aforementioned Dr Frank himself. His staff had also played a key role in its production, notably H. H. Stallberg, the official responsible for tourism in the government’s propaganda department, who was thanked for providing comprehensive notes for the publisher’s use. This may help to explain why the only site in the entire guide to earn the coveted Baedeker two stars was the Governor General’s principal – though far from only – official residence, the Wawel complex (‘the castle’ to Baedeker) in the capital city of Kraków. However, readers hoping to marvel at its magnificent interiors or the ‘beautiful view from the north bastion’ would largely have been disappointed: the most important tourist attraction in the whole territory could only be visited with ‘special permission’.[6]

More immediately disconcerting was the warning for drivers, accompanying the eminently sensible recommendation to bring a tyre-repair kit, that when ‘on

long, isolated stretches or travelling by night, it is also advisable at the present to carry a weapon'. Equally suggestive was the fact that the 'conditions of the country have made the introduction of a special Service Post [for official business] necessary', ensuring that mail went through trustworthy channels, or rather 'only through German hands'. Indeed, this latter phrase could almost have served as the book's subtitle, for *Baedekers Generalgouvernement* was as much a hymn to Germany and Germans as it was a practical travel guide. The 'countless, often submerged traces of old German cultural and pioneering work' referred to in the introduction were highlighted with astonishing and tedious frequency. Ever since northern Europeans had first settled in the region in, apparently, the late Stone Age, Germanic culture had, readers were assured, been the constant wellspring of any achievement of note.[7]

This was most obvious in the architecture of the cities, as in the case of Kraków whose townscape would impress visitors as that of 'a predominantly German city, in which one everywhere encounters the traces of German labour and German culture'. Its most immediately recognizable building, St Mary's Church on the main market square ('Adolf-Hitler-Platz'), was the 'most magnificent construction of Kraków's German citizenry, in which German was preached until 1537'. The same was true even for small and relatively remote urban centres such as Żółkiew with its 'typically German' central square. Even when uniquely Teutonic architectural features were not identified, the potted histories which preceded the descriptions of towns followed an unvarying formula of early medieval German settlement, leading inevitably to enrichment and cultural achievement. In the countryside, visitors could find similar

legacies in the ‘numerous German settlements’ around towns such as Radomsko in the west or Kałusz in the east.[8]

The most obvious of the many problems raised by this one-eyed approach to history was the fact that the region (never described in the text as a state) was not actually German. Although portions of its territory had spent the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries under Austrian or (briefly) Prussian rule, Germans, by the book’s own admission, made up only 0.7 per cent of the population.[9] Thus, the promise to show ‘the land and people as they really are’ proved a rather hollow one. Indeed, one of the distinctive features of *Baedekers Generalgouvernement* was the contempt in which the local peoples and cultures were held, when they were mentioned at all.

Such attitudes were evident in what is normally one of the more essential sections of any guidebook, that on language. There was some advice on pronunciation of the principal indigenous tongue, Polish, but it was accompanied by an exceptionally meagre vocabulary. Whilst this was not unusual for Baedeker guides, the choice of words was intriguing. For example, the only foodstuffs included were bread, butter, meat, eggs and cheese (although this would have given visitors access to more staple items than many members of the non-German population were legally allowed) yet space was found for, as the final word in the vocabulary, ‘forbidden’ (a term with which locals were all too familiar). Any deeper understanding was, it was claimed, undesirable since German was to be used when communicating with the inhabitants in the towns: a visitor ‘will then as a German only speak Polish or Ukrainian when it is absolutely necessary’. A pocket dictionary would be necessary in the countryside to make oneself understood but only at the most rudimentary level. After all, Polish was

simply too difficult for Germans, ‘for whom the Slavic world is alien’. This was hardly surprising, since Polish ‘disintegrates into several dialects’. That said, it did contain ‘several thousand loan words’ from German (estimated at around 17 per cent of the language) which, inevitably, again illustrated ‘the German roots of the culture’.[10]

These comments were typical of the mentality which characterized the book and revealed the Generalgouvernement, or General Government (GG) as it is most commonly styled in English, for what it really was: a colonial regime. Numerous other examples of the Germans’ status as imperial overlords could be found throughout. The train system provided ‘separate ticket counters, waiting rooms, barriers and railway carriages’ for Germans. There were German-run hotels in most cities and in the resorts, whilst even in small towns ‘a number of beds’ were sometimes ‘set aside for Germans’. Readers were assured that all properties listed in the guide, unless otherwise indicated, were under German management.[11]

Assertions of Herrenvolk privilege were accompanied by denigration of the history and culture of Poland and its various peoples. Centuries of ‘Polish mismanagement’ had led to the ‘proletarianization and impoverishment’ of the population and ‘technical backwardness’ in all areas of the economy, deficiencies which could only be remedied ‘through the initiative of the neighbouring Greater German Reich’. The consequences of this ‘initiative’ were emphasized throughout the book whether it was the reconstruction of the ‘very poor’ road system inherited from the Poles or the regeneration of apparently every town in the country. A typical example was the eastern city of Stanisławów whose decline from a medieval (and German-led) heyday was being reversed ‘under new German

leadership' to make it 'an up-and-coming economic centre' and tourist hub.[12]

Of course, *Baedekers Generalgouvernement* was hardly the first or last book in the history of travel publishing to parrot official banalities regarding renewal and transformation. And, in fact, buried within its text were hints that extraordinary changes were indeed occurring in the General Government, albeit of a rather different character. What, for example, was the careful reader to make of the population statistics provided? In addition to the 0.7 per cent who were German, 72 per cent were listed as Polish and 17 per cent Ukrainian. No mention was made of who the other 10 per cent might have been. More intriguing still was the fact that these figures were for a population of approximately 18 million and yet were immediately followed by a statistical table which gave the total population for the General Government (broken down this time by district rather than ethnicity) on 23 November 1942 as 16,958,383 – more than 1 million people had disappeared in the space of a few lines. Who were these people? Were they connected to the unnamed 10 per cent of the earlier population? And what had happened to them? Perhaps the answers to these questions were connected to an easily missed reference towards the end of the Kraków chapter. The usual descriptions of 'stately' churches in the Kazimierz area were preceded by a brief historical outline explaining the suburb's foundation in 1335 by King Kazimierz III and its role as the original site of the city's university; it 'was later however, in part, the domicile of the Jewish population of Kraków (now free of Jews)'.[13]

Naturally, Baedeker chose not to elaborate. Nonetheless, it was noticeable that on the rare occasions when Jews were mentioned in the text it was always in negative terms and

always in the past tense. For example, the aforementioned ‘Polish mismanagement’, which had so ruined the nation, had also ‘left an enormous share of the country’s earnings in the hands of the Jewish trading class’, presumably another reason why Poland had had to be rescued by its benevolent neighbour. Most references to Jews were to be found in the brief histories accompanying the descriptions of a small number of towns and cities scattered across the General Government. A typical example was ‘the old German city Reichshof’ (better known to the people who actually lived there as Rzeszów) which ‘was, since the nineteenth century, dominated by numerous Jews, until the city again came under German guidance after the Polish campaign’. In only one case in the entire book was a somewhat more substantial account of Jewish life offered. This was for Lublin, a provincial capital and the General Government’s fifth largest city, which had enjoyed the usual medieval German-inspired prosperity. Decline had begun in the 1600s when Lublin was afflicted by plague and numerous military occupations, but it was really in the eighteenth century that decay had set in due to a fire that had almost destroyed the city

> and above all through the spread of the Jews who made Lublin their stronghold, held annual synods here until 1764 and also possessed a Talmud school with the largest Talmudic library in Europe (1862 the city had 57% Jews, now it is free of Jews).[14]

A rather better understanding of what the coy term ‘free of Jews’ meant in Kraków and Lublin can be gleaned from an elliptic message sent between the two cities on the morning of 11 January 1943. This was a telegram transmitted from

Baedeker's Jewish stronghold by a senior SS officer named Hermann Höfle to his colleague Franz Heim in the GG's capital. Its contents would have remained unknown had it not been intercepted by the Police Section of the British Government Code and Cypher School at Bletchley Park. British intelligence had begun decoding German police signals even before the war had started but successful reading of a specific message was rather hit and miss given the volume of traffic and reception problems.[15] Indeed, all that had been intercepted of another telegram sent by Höfle five minutes earlier was its designation as a 'state secret' and the name of its addressee, SS Obersturmbannführer Eichmann in Berlin. The British had better luck with the second message although its reception was still incomplete:

> Subject: fortnightly report Einsatz REINHART. Reference: radio telegram from there. Arrivals until 31.12.42, L 12761, B 0, S 515, T 10335 total 23611. Situation ... 31.12.42, L 24733, B 434508, S 101370, T 71355, total 1274166.[16]

However, it is clear that the intelligence services, having decoded the message, had no idea what it meant. In the monthly summary for January 1943, the telegram was tersely recorded, as the last item in the 'Miscellaneous' section: 'Einsatz REINHARDT. SS und Pol.fuehrer LUBLIN sends the Befehlshaber Sipo KRAKAU a report on Einsatz REINHARDT'; the figures were repeated but with no analysis of their meaning.[17] It is unknown whether anyone at Bletchley Park noticed that the second group of numbers (the summary for the whole of 1942) did not add up to the final total or calculated that this could be achieved by adding an extra 5 to the number for 'T' to give the evidently

correct total of 713,555. In any event, the document was filed away and remained hidden for more than half a century until the British government began to declassify the police intercepts in 1997.

It is hardly surprising that the British were baffled. Without any knowledge of what ‘Einsatz Reinhart’ signified, the message was an evidently important but ultimately mysterious collection of letters and numbers. However, by the time historians discovered it in 2000, they were very well aware what ‘Einsatz Reinhart’, more usually termed Aktion Reinhard, meant.[18] In short, the Höfle Telegram, as the message has become known, was an inventory of mass murder. The letters referred to four killing sites: ‘L’ represented Lublin, or rather the large concentration camp better known as Majdanek in the city’s suburbs; ‘B’, ‘S’ and ‘T’ were, respectively, Bełżec, Sobibór and Treblinka, three purpose-built extermination centres located close to the General Government’s eastern borders. And the numbers? They, more or less, represented the people – Jewish men, women and children – murdered at these locations in a single calendar year. In fact, it is most likely that the figures for Bełżec, Sobibór and Treblinka were actually the numbers of Jews transported to these sites but this was, in effect, the same thing, as illustrated by the case of Bełżec: of the 434,508 unfortunates sent to the camp before it closed in late 1942, two survived.

In just a few letters and digits, therefore, the Höfle Telegram outlined the largest killing operation of the Holocaust, Aktion Reinhard being the German code name for the murder of Jews in the General Government. The reality was even more chilling, if that is possible. The telegram did not include the tens of thousands of Jews who had been shot in countless locations across the GG during the course of

Aktion Reinhard in 1942. Nor did it cover the more than 100,000 who had succumbed to disease and starvation as a result of German occupation policy since 1939 or the thousands who had been victims of the first mass shootings in the autumn of 1941 before the Aktion had officially begun. And, of course, the killings did not end in 1942. Between the transmission of the telegram in January 1943 and the official termination of Aktion Reinhard towards the end of that year, the overwhelming majority of the Jews who had survived thus far would lose their lives, along with tens of thousands deported to Treblinka and Sobibór from across the continent. Ultimately, approximately one in every three victims of the Holocaust was murdered in the General Government, more than anywhere else in Europe.

One further point is worth noting. The killings included in the Höfle Telegram had only begun on 17 March and then only in Bełżec. Treblinka, which accounted for more than half of the total victims, had commenced its dismal work as late as 23 July; that is, more than 700,000 people were murdered at Treblinka in just five months,[19] more than at any other place in any year in history. In fact, the overwhelming majority – more than 1 million – of the victims in the telegram, together with thousands more who were shot, were killed during these few months in the late summer and autumn of 1942 in an astonishingly rapid wave of violence without parallel in the history of the Holocaust (or of any other event). It was at precisely this time that Oskar Steinheil, an employee of Baedeker of Leipzig, was travelling through Poland at the personal invitation of Hans Frank to research a new guidebook designed to introduce visitors to the benefits of 'the work of organization and construction' brought by the Germans to the General Government.[20]

One of the hundreds of Jewish communities destroyed by Aktion Reinhard was that of Szczebrzeszyn, ‘a small town (8,000 inhabitants), with two Baroque churches, in a charming location on the left bank of the Wieprz’ according to Baedeker. By the time this entry was published, the town’s population was considerably smaller. Indeed, the first postwar census of February 1946 found only 5,122 residents, prompting the following reflection from a local diarist: ‘I write this as a comparison; before the war there had been 7800 inhabitants, 39 percent of them Jews. Now there are no Jews at all.’[21]

The same observer had carefully recorded their fate over the course of 1942. On 8 May – ‘a terrible day’ – more than 100 people were murdered as the Germans ‘shot people like ducks, killing them not only on the streets but also in their own houses – men, women and children, indiscriminately’. Worse was to follow. On the morning of 8 August, railway workers brought alarming news of the arrival of ‘a large train with fifty-five cars’:

> So far there are no volunteers, so the Germans began mass arrests. I asked a gendarme what would happen if the Jews did not show up. His answer was, ‘We will kill them here.’

Many Jews went into hiding but hundreds were seized from their homes or shelters and forced to the town’s market hall in a large-scale police operation which continued ‘throughout the entire day’. By 7 p.m., the diarist was recording that ‘Jewish houses are empty’. Two hours later, he felt compelled to hastily add another entry: ‘Around 8 P.M. the Germans began moving the Jews from the marketplace. Some Jews attempted to escape, but the

German police stopped them by shooting them.' The remainder were hurried to the railway station two miles away – 'older men and women who were unable to walk were beaten by the gendarmes' – where they were joined by around 1,000 Jews brought from nearby communities. The Germans had spread rumours that the train would be sent eastwards but the writer was not fooled: 'No one believes the Jews will be moved to the Ukraine. They will all be killed.' Two days later he learned that the train had reached Bełżec.[22]

Then came 21 October 1942, a day of 'indescribable events' as police scoured the town, forcing Jews from their hiding places: 'Pistol and gun shots were heard throughout the entire day. Sometimes hand grenades were thrown into the cellars.' By the end of the day, in the author's estimation, between 400 and 500 people had been murdered; hundreds more were held overnight to await deportation:

> It was a terrifying day. I cannot describe everything that took place. You cannot even imagine the barbarism of the Germans. I am completely broken and cannot seem to find myself.

The captured Jews who had not been murdered were loaded onto a train to Bełżec on the following day. In the meantime, the massacres continued in Szczebrzeszyn itself as the manhunt intensified. Many were shot in their own homes but the town's hilltop Jewish cemetery also became an execution site. The diarist noted on 22 October that 'huge trenches are being dug' in the cemetery; 'Jews are being shot while lying there.' By 24 October, he was recording the constant stream brought to the cemetery from neighbouring

villages. Most of the victims were ‘old men, women, and small children’.[23]

The writer of these accounts was Dr Zygmunt Klukowski, whose diary of the war years has justly been described as ‘the most vivid and detailed record we have of life in Poland under German occupation’.[24] Much of its value stemmed from the personal qualities of the author. Klukowski was an intelligent and transparently decent man, driven by a strong sense of patriotic and civic duty. Born in 1885, he had lived in Szczebrzeszyn since his appointment as superintendant of its small hospital in 1919, in which time he had become one of the town’s most prominent citizens. Klukowski’s greatest passions were book collecting and local history, interests which made him a diligent chronicler of the misfortunes which befell wartime Szczebrzeszyn. Despite the considerable personal risk of keeping the diary, Klukowski believed that his labour was essential since ‘short notes written under fresh impressions have more meaning as historical documents than elaborate writing done after a long time has passed’.[25] The result was a meticulous, sympathetically observed account which would later inform a number of well-regarded books on the Nazi occupation which Klukowski published after the war.

However, the importance of the diary also lay in the location of Szczebrzeszyn itself. Although it has since reverted to its traditional position as a rather sleepy market town, best known in Poland as the subject of a notorious tongue twister, during the war it found itself at the very heart of the horror. Szczebrzeszyn lies in the middle of the Zamojszczyzna region south of Lublin, an area whose name derives from the beautiful Renaissance city of Zamość (predictably, in Baedeker’s eyes a product of ‘German

influence').[26] Zamość aside, however, this was a land of small towns, often with Jewish majorities, and villages in which most of the Polish and Ukrainian populations struggled to make a living as poor farmers or agricultural labourers. Between many of these communities stretched forests which would in due course shelter numerous partisan groups which increasingly resisted German rule. However, in the summer and autumn of 1942 these forests served a far darker purpose as the sites of mass executions of Jews, thereby relieving the pressure on the gas chambers of Bełżec, themselves located in the south of Zamojszczyzna.[27]

Of course, Baedeker did not dwell on such matters, yet the guide nevertheless offered an intriguing description of the region:

> The Zamość district has a strong German (from the Palatinate) settlement area, arising from around 1800, that has preserved its German character until today and is currently being strengthened through new resettlement.[28]

Quite what this 'new resettlement' entailed was apparent in entries Klukowski began to record just weeks after the destruction of Szczebrzeszyn's Jews. On 30 November 1942, he noted the first reports of population movements from villages north and west of Zamość. Over the course of the next two days, 'without interruption', a tide of refugees flooded through the town as villagers sought to escape the violent operation which was evidently in progress. On the night of 2 December, Klukowski reflected:

> I can still hear the noise of horse-drawn wagons going by. I think of all the thousands of people moving into the unknown. With the winter weather many will not survive, especially small children.

The diary entries of the following days recorded the growing terror seizing the Polish population of Zamojszczyzna as more and more villages were cleared by the Germans. By 5 December, people were ‘in a panic. They move from place to place, sleep completely clothed, and wait for the gendarmes to come.’

It was only on 8 December that Klukowski began to receive detailed information from the villages themselves, with reports of the settlement of ethnic Germans from Bessarabia (modern Moldova) in the communities which had been cleared of Poles. He was naturally more concerned with the fate of the latter: ‘We ask ourselves, Where are the Germans taking the fully loaded trains of evacuees?’ Unknown to the doctor, one of these trains, carrying 644 people, left Zamość at four o’clock in the afternoon of 10 December. It travelled in a westerly direction for more than 48 hours, crossing the General Government’s border with Germany’s Upper Silesia province. An hour before midnight on 12 December, it reached its destination: Oświęcim, or, as Baedeker had it, ‘Auschwitz, an industrial town of 12,000 inhabitants’.[29]

Klukowski was recording the beginning of what has become known as the Zamość Aktion. Despite the parallels with Aktion Reinhard, this was not a systematic campaign of mass murder, although many people did indeed lose their lives as a result of it. Rather, it was a programme of ethnic cleansing, appalling in its own right, in which more than 100,000 Polish peasants and their families were expelled

from almost 300 villages in the Zamość region in the period up to August 1943. Thousands were deported to Germany or to concentration camps whilst young children, together with old, sick and disabled people, were essentially left to die. Several thousand other children were simply stolen from their parents and sent to Germany to be raised as members of the master race. The emptied villages and farms were to be settled with ethnic Germans, thereby achieving the strengthening of the region's 'German character' which so enchanted Baedeker.

Both Aktion Reinhard and the Zamość Aktion highlight the role of the General Government as the principal racial laboratory of the Third Reich. Created in the autumn of 1939 following the German and Soviet invasion of Poland, the GG consisted of those German-occupied Polish territories, including the historic capitals of Warsaw and Kraków, considered by the Nazis to be insufficiently racially or economically valuable to merit direct incorporation into the Reich. As such, it formed the first genuine Nazi colony, separate from but ruled by Germany through a brutal and corrupt regime headed, if not always controlled, by Hans Frank, a vain and callous yet also weak-willed Nazi Old Fighter.

From the very moment of its inception, the General Government was central to all Nazi plans for the reordering of Europe. Initially, and much to Frank's irritation, these involved treating it as a racial dustbin into which the supposedly inferior peoples of the rest of Hitler's empire could be thrown. However, in due course, it assumed the central role in various plans for the 'Germanization' of the East which both Frank and his more ideologically driven rivals in the SS and police apparatus sought to impose. The

Zamość Aktion was very much pushed by the latter and ultimately failed, meaning that it was not repeated elsewhere within Frank's dominion. However, it had been intended to serve as a template for the ethnic reordering of eastern Europe as a whole, offering a terrifying vista of what the Nazis would have done had they won the war to accompany the even more appalling reality of what they did whilst losing it. As the concluding words of a lengthy essay in the Baedeker by Ernst R. Fugmann of the Institut für deutsche Ostarbeit, Hans Frank's ersatz university in Kraków, explained, the 'overriding objective remains the reinfusion of this Vistula space with German people and with German consciousness in every sense'.[30]

This goes some way towards answering the ostensibly baffling question of why a tourist guidebook was written and published in the midst of the most intensive campaign of genocide and ethnic cleansing in human history.[31] That is, *Baedekers Generalgouvernement* was a propagandistic assertion of the intended permanence of the German presence in Poland (although, with an unfortunate sense of timing not uncommon in publishing, it was released after Stalingrad had rather cast doubt on these claims). After all, the book was commissioned by Hans Frank who, despite his occasional and utterly unsuccessful attempts to present himself as a benign if necessarily strict father of the Polish people, ultimately shared the long-term Nazi vision for the region and was fully implicated in the murder of its Jews.

However, the Baedeker was not merely a statement of commitment to eternal German mastery over the East for it also served a more immediate and practical purpose. Bizarre though it might seem, there was indeed tourism of a sort in the General Government. Numerous diaries and memoirs attested to the presence of German sightseers,

often in hideously inappropriate locations, although such sites did not necessarily always find their way into the guidebook. This was especially true for the largest city, Warsaw, which sat at the heart of the major road and rail links between Germany and the Eastern Front. A particularly popular sight for visitors was the ghetto into which the city's Jewish community – the largest in Europe – had been herded in the autumn of 1940. Ghettoization brought spiralling death rates in spring 1941, so much so that the enormous Jewish cemetery on the north-western edge of the ghetto could not cope with the convoys of corpses being delivered. Michał Zylberberg, a teacher, later recalled:

> It was not only the funeral processions that made the cemetery so strangely lively, but the constant presence of hundreds of German soldiers. They gleefully photographed the dead and the accompanying relatives, and even went so far as taking snapshots of the corpses as they were laid out in the mortuary.

In a diary entry for 20 May 1941, the historian and social activist Emanuel Ringelblum similarly noted the Germans who 'take all kinds of photographs. The shed where dozens of corpses lie during the day awaiting burial at night is particularly popular.' It is clear that not all German authorities were happy with this – a year later Ringelblum was reporting the appearance of 'a big sign in German in the cemetery ordering Germans not to visit' – whilst the territory of the cemetery was left as a white space on the map of the city included in the Baedeker even though the neighbouring Christian graveyards were marked.[32] In fact, the publication of the guide coincided with the final

destruction of the ghetto, leaving the cemetery as virtually the only intact physical remnant of Jewish Warsaw: any tourists tempted to wander the former ghetto streets (which did appear on the map though, unsurprisingly, without any designation as such) would have found only rubble.

Who were these 'tourists'? As Zylberberg noted, many were soldiers. This was especially true in the spring of 1941 when there was a massive concentration of German forces in the General Government in advance of the invasion of the Soviet Union. However, Ringelblum pointed out that the 'groups of excursionists' included 'private visitors' as well as 'military men'. Clearly, given the prevailing wartime conditions, these people were not vacationing German families. Nonetheless, large numbers of civilians found themselves in the GG. Some were transient – businessmen or officials from Berlin who took advantage of professional commitments in Poland to sample the exotic local human fauna alongside the cafes and spas which filled the Baedeker. And yet, as its introduction explained, the book was intended 'not only for travellers, but everyone who is concerned with the Vistula space'. This helps to explain why it listed facilities such as bars and restaurants in the major cities which existed 'only for members of the authorities and their guests', not to mention the delights of the SS and police theatres in Kraków and Lwów.[33] However, these administrators and killers formed only a portion of those 'concerned with the Vistula space'. The General Government attracted a motley assortment of adventurers, fanatics and eccentrics who saw in the East the chance of fulfilment, be it as an entrepreneur taking advantage of unique market conditions or as one of the 'smiling missionaries'[34] of the League of German Maidens who brought kindergartens and homilies on housekeeping to the ethnic German settlers who

took over the unwillingly vacated farms of the Zamość region.

These varied pioneers of the New Order highlighted the position of the General Government as the heart of the German 'Wild East'. As flippant as this phrase might sound, it is one which has gained increasing historical currency,[35] for it in many ways accurately reflects the reality of life in the GG. The implicit comparison with the Wild West – one which even the Nazis themselves made[36] – was evident in this sense of a land of opportunity where individuals with shady pasts or failed careers could reinvent themselves. The GG also afforded the chance to amass fortunes both through legalized robbery and extortion and, often simultaneously, through the circumvention of official regulations for personal profit, a practice in which Frank enthusiastically led the way.

However, the General Government resembled the Wild West stereotype in deeper ways. This was most obvious in a prevailing sense of lawlessness, an 'anything goes' mentality which distinguished German rule in the East from the ostensibly more traditional forms of occupation policy practised elsewhere in Europe. Despite Frank's frequent expressions of pedantic legalism, the General Government was a territory in which even the flimsy restraints present in Germany did not exist (a point in which Frank revelled on other occasions). That is not to say that the Germans did not impose thousands of laws and regulations on the native population. One of the characteristics of life in the General Government was the incessant barrage of restrictions, accompanied by absurdly draconian punishments, to which its people were subjected. However, another defining characteristic of life under Frank's regime was the growing contempt with which such laws were held, creating a society

in which, in very different ways, both rulers and ruled paid little heed to conventional notions of the rule of law.

Above all, the General Government was a territory in which daily life was ruled by extraordinary levels of violence. This was a land where 42,000 people could be shot in just two days, where to be an intellectual was to carry a death sentence, and where thousands of children could be forcibly abducted from their families, never to see their homeland again. In turn, it became a society in which elements of the indigenous populations increasingly responded with violence of their own, directed not only against the bringers of such misery but, tragically, against each other. The GG became, in the words of Poland's greatest twentieth-century writer, 'a mechanical slaughterhouse'.[37]

Nowhere was this more true than in the General Government's role in the Holocaust, a role which marked it out even from the appalling experiences of the other territories in the Nazi East (the western regions of Poland directly incorporated into the Reich, the occupied Soviet Union). Although the murder of Europe's Jews was, from spring 1942 at least, a coordinated process, it must also be seen as a series of partially distinct killing operations, each with its own unique characteristics. This is especially important as so much popular understanding of the Holocaust is, for many eminently understandable reasons, dominated by Auschwitz-Birkenau, creating a rather incomplete, and in some senses untypical, picture. After all, approximately twice as many Jews lost their lives in the General Government as in Auschwitz yet their experiences have barely penetrated non-specialist discourse, not least because, unlike Auschwitz, there were next to no survivors of the killing sites. Of course, this point is not intended to

suggest that Auschwitz should be ignored. Rather, it illustrates the importance of studying each constituent part of the Nazi empire in order to better understand the whole.

This book therefore seeks to offer the reader a summary of the history of perhaps the most significant of these constituent parts. Although it does employ some previously underutilized sources, such as the Baedeker,[38] it draws primarily on the pioneering studies of a great many historians, most of which have been produced from the 1990s onwards. This reflects fundamental shifts which have taken place in the historiography of Nazism and the Holocaust since the end of the Cold War, notably a necessary and ongoing switch in focus from the central authorities in Berlin to the localities of eastern Europe, and the development of a more integrated history of Nazi rule which moves beyond traditional perpetrator-centred narratives to encompass the experiences of Germans, Poles, Jews and others, and the varied interactions between them.[39] Yet despite the incomparably rich historical research thus generated, there is as yet no history of the General Government as a whole, a deficiency which the present work therefore seeks in part to remedy by bringing to a wider audience some sense of the strange reality of life and death in a territory in which millions of human beings were stripped of their dignity, livelihoods and, all too often, their existence, whilst German tourists, guidebooks in hand, enjoyed the culture and nightlife of cities that were now ‘free of Jews’.

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1
‘The Devil’s work’
Origins

THE FIRST GERMAN CIVILIANS TO VISIT THE GENERAL GOVERNMENT belonged to a grim procession of Nazi leaders and officials who toured Poland in the autumn of 1939. Amongst them was Joseph Goebbels who found time, in between issuing press directives on the propaganda war against Britain and viewing the latest rushes for his notorious anti-Semitic ‘documentary’ *Der Ewige Jude*, to travel to the prostrate land on 31 October 1939. Goebbels arrived in Łódź – ‘a hideous city’ – where he met Hans Frank in the newly appointed Governor General’s temporary headquarters. Visiting the Jewish quarter, the Propaganda Minister observed:

> It is indescribable. These are no longer human beings, they are animals. For this reason, our task is no longer humanitarian but surgical. Steps must be taken here, and they must be radical ones, make no mistake.

From Łódź, Goebbels travelled by road to Warsaw, a place he found ‘repulsive and scarcely describable’. He did at least have the grace to link this to the military campaign –

‘Our bombs and shells have done a thorough job’ – but it is clear that Goebbels found Poland an alien and hostile environment: ‘This is already Asia [...] The country is oppressive in its bleakness.’[1]

These thoughts echoed a series of conversations Goebbels had had with Hitler a few weeks earlier. On 14 October, they had agreed that ‘Asia starts in Poland. This nation’s civilisation is not worth consideration.’ Four days earlier, Hitler had been even more forthright:

> The Führer’s verdict on the Poles is damning. More like animals than human beings, completely primitive, stupid and amorphous. And a ruling class that is an unsatisfactory result of mingling between the lower orders and an Aryan master-race. The Poles’ dirtiness is unimaginable. Their capacity for intelligent judgement is absolutely nil.

Goebbels was not the only recipient of such wisdom. On 29 September, Hitler had discussed Poland with Alfred Rosenberg, the Nazi Party’s self-appointed intellectual guru (and, from 1941, the hapless satrap of the occupied Soviet territories to the GG’s east):

> The Poles: a thin Germanic layer, underneath dreadful material. The Jews, the most horrible thing that one can imagine. The towns covered in dirt. He has learnt a lot in these weeks. Above all: if Poland had still ruled for a few decades over the old parts of the Reich, everything would have been lice-ridden and decayed[;] only a purposeful, masterful hand could rule here now.

Hitler had even expressed relief to Goebbels on 10 October that medieval Germany had not ‘conquered the East’ for ‘the result would certainly have been a strongly slavicised race of German mongrels’. Instead, the current situation was better since ‘now we know the laws of racial heredity and can handle things accordingly’.[2]

Such attitudes would appear to offer ample confirmation of expectations of Nazi views of Poles and Poland. Of course, the horror expressed by Goebbels and Hitler towards Polish Jews did indeed reflect the overriding centrality of anti-Semitism in the Nazi worldview. Yet it has also become axiomatic to many that Hitler’s racism always encompassed Poles (and other Slavs), viewing them as intrinsically subhuman peoples ripe for enslavement and ultimate expulsion. Many historians of Poland, from across the ideological spectrum, have gone further, taking it for granted that the Poles were next in line for extermination after the Jews,[3] a view that came to be widely held in the General Government itself from late 1942 onwards. The reality was rather more complex.

Anti-Polish prejudice was undoubtedly common in Germany, perhaps more so than anti-Semitism in the pre-Nazi era. The eighteenth-century partitions of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth – which saw Poland divided between Prussia, Austria and Russia – had encouraged racist stereotypes of Poles as inherently incapable of state-building, accompanied by associations with dirt, disease and idleness. This perception was expressed in the colloquial term ‘*polnische Wirtschaft*’ (literally, ‘Polish economy’ but often translated as ‘Polish muddle’), used to suggest a state of disorganization and stupidity. Not all Germans agreed, as the Baedeker gracelessly acknowledged when it noted the

‘unfounded Polish enthusiasm’ in Germany during the Polish insurrection against Russian rule in 1830–1. Nonetheless, nineteenth-century German nationalism was increasingly characterized by a chauvinistic attitude towards Poland, and eastern Europe in general, in which disdain for the benighted Slavic lands was allied to a growing sense of Germany’s civilizing mission in the East. This reflected not only the confidence of German nationalism, especially following unification, but also its insecurities since Poles constituted the largest ethnic minority in Prussia and then the German Empire. Drawing in part on the Social Darwinist ideas of the time, Europe was represented in terms of a west–east ‘*Kulturgefälle*’ (‘cultural gradient’) along which Germans were the eternal and sole ‘*Kulturträger*’ (‘culture bearers’), ideas which had implications not merely for Prussian Poland but for the whole of eastern Europe. Indeed, such theories implicitly, and often explicitly, posited that exposure to German culture had elevated the Kaiserreich’s Polish citizens to a higher level than that of their fellow nationals in Congress Poland or Galicia, the areas ruled respectively by Russia and Austria-Hungary which would form the future General Government. Such attitudes hardened in the First World War when, despite some pro-Polish measures in territories captured from the Russians, the contact of millions of Germans, as soldiers and administrators, with life in the East tended to reinforce existing prejudices of dirt and squalor and a sense of mission as carriers of culture and order.[4]

Following the war, Poland’s regained independence became a vivid symbol of the shock of German defeat and the sense of humiliation which accompanied the peace settlement. The Treaty of Versailles had actually largely restored the eighteenth-century border (in fact, Germany

retained some pre-partition Polish territory) but many simply could not accept the idea of a Polish state. The enduring image of '*polnische Wirtschaft*' was manifested in the characterization of Poland as a '*Saisonstaat*' ('seasonal state'), created at the whim of the Allies and incapable of organizing its own development. All Weimar governments pursued a revanchist policy towards Poland, almost the only area of consensus between the republic's fissiparous parties. In this they were supported by the nascent academic discipline of *Ostforschung* ('Eastern research') which had emerged at the beginning of the century and became increasingly politicized under Weimar, seeking out evidence of ancient Germanic roots in the East and highlighting the subsequent civilizing role of Germans to justify revisionist claims. Such work could equally be used to support designs on rather wider areas of Poland and eastern Europe, a point which would later draw many *Ostforscher*, including the academic contributors to the Baedeker, to the Nazis.[5]

However, the most striking feature of early Nazi literature in this context is the almost complete absence of references to Poles. *Mein Kampf* mentioned Poles or Poland only four times and two of these instances were fleeting, within discussions of Germany's alliance policy. The slightly more substantial references came in short paragraphs criticizing the 'half-hearted' policy of the Wilhelmine era towards the Prussian Poles: Hitler did refer to the 'inferiority' of the Poles but within the context of condemnation of nationalist demands for their linguistic assimilation which would merely have led to 'a people of alien race expressing its alien ideas in the German language'. Unpleasant as these comments were, they did not in themselves suggest an early intention to destroy the entire Polish nation.[6]

Hitler's unpublished 'Second Book', written in 1928, was seemingly more suggestive. 'The ethnic state', meaning a racist state following Nazi ideology,

> could under absolutely no circumstances annex Poles with the intention of turning them into Germans one day. It would instead have to decide either to isolate these alien racial elements in order to prevent the repeated contamination of one's own people's blood, or it would have to immediately remove them entirely, transferring the land and territory that thus became free to members of one's own ethnic community.[7]

However, although there appeared to be clear parallels here with later Nazi policy in Poland, Hitler was once more discussing the alleged failure of the Kaiserreich to properly handle its minorities (which, as he noted, also included the French-speaking population of Alsace-Lorraine). Such ideas would undoubtedly have had implications for the formerly German provinces of western Poland, given the Nazi demand for total revision of the Versailles settlement, but it is far from clear that Hitler gave much thought to the future of Poland as a whole in the 1920s.

Both books were suffused with Hitler's obsession with Lebensraum which was, along with anti-Semitism, the most significant and consistent feature of his ideology. However, there can be little doubt that his target here was the Soviet Union rather than Poland. Not only did Hitler devote far more space to the former than the latter; his language was much more explicitly racist. In his eyes, Russians were incapable of forming their own state or culture – the creation of the Romanov empire had been the achievement of a 'Teutonic upper class'. When this elite was cast off by the

Bolshevik Revolution, the inevitable outcome, given Russian inferiority, had been that 'Jews took over the leadership of all areas of Russian life'. Given 'the overall tendency of Judaism, which is ultimately only destructive', the USSR would fall into 'perpetual agitation and uncertainty', thereby facilitating 'the goal of German foreign policy in the one and only place possible: space in the East.'[8]

In passing these crude judgements on Russians, Hitler admittedly deployed racist stereotypes of Slavs as a whole, such as 'Slavic peoples themselves generally lack state-forming powers'. However, this did not necessarily yet make Poland a target. Hitler often showed pragmatism in his policy towards Slavic nations, allying with Bulgaria and allowing the creation of new states in Slovakia and Croatia, both of which proved willing partners in the Holocaust. Even the Czechs, against whom Hitler developed prejudices in his Austrian youth, did not in the main suffer to anything like the extent that Russians or Poles did, despite often brutal persecution of the intelligentsia.[9] Thus, although Hitler undoubtedly saw Slavs as in some sense racially inferior, he did not harbour clear long-term plans for their conquest and enslavement except in the case of the Soviet Union. Even this was as much a case of anti-Bolshevism and anti-Semitism (synonymous in Hitler's mind) as of Russophobia. The clearest evidence that Hitler was not pursuing a predetermined plan towards Poland lay in what he actually did.

Hitler's accession to power in 1933 did represent a break in Germany's Polish policy but this was in terms of moderation, at least ostensibly. The Weimar period had seen a state of constant hostility, expressed in trade wars, friction over the rights of Poland's German minority and the Free City of

Danzig (officially under League of Nations stewardship but with certain rights granted to Poland), and an incessant stream of revisionist propaganda. Weimar policy aimed at border revision, even, if necessary, in cooperation with the USSR, the consideration of which had prompted Hitler's anti-Russian diatribes in the 1920s (although he would, of course, later carry out the same policy in 1939).

Precisely because Hitler's ambitions in the East were so much greater – Lebensraum at the expense of the USSR rather than the restoration of the pre-1914 borders – he was less fixated on Poland. This enabled him to pursue a more pragmatic course, despite resistance from his conservative allies, leading to a ten-year non-aggression pact with Poland in January 1934, the first major treaty between Nazi Germany and another state (if one ignores the Concordat with the Vatican). Of course, Hitler would be no stranger to temporary tactical agreements which could later be abandoned and it was always likely that he would seek the restoration of Danzig at least. Nonetheless, he largely attempted to uphold the treaty in the ensuing years, despite outbreaks of tension in the Free City which were sometimes prompted, sometimes restrained, by the Führer himself.[10]

However, Hitler's Polish policy was based on a fundamental misunderstanding. As German power increased in the late 1930s, he assumed that Poland would allow itself to become a client state, subordinating its foreign policy to that of Germany in return for the occasional territorial scrap thrown to it as Hitler dismembered one country after another. There were other states such as Hungary which seemed willing to play this role and the Polish government appeared to evince a similar desire when it exploited the Munich crisis to seize the disputed Těšín (Cieszyn in Polish) region from Czechoslovakia. However, Poland had never

been interested in a full alliance. Rather, Polish diplomacy in the 1930s aimed to maintain equidistance between Germany and the Soviet Union through correct relations with both, an understandable position given the lack of confidence that Poland's nominal allies, France and Britain, inspired. As Hitler increasingly offered the choice of becoming a vassal or a victim, the Poles, understandably, wished to choose neither.[11]

Matters came to a head after the Munich agreement when Germany made the latest in a series of repeated offers to Poland to join the Anti-Comintern Pact but combined it with demands for Danzig and extraterritorial road and rail links through the Polish Corridor (the former Prussian provinces). In return, Poland would receive an extension of the non-aggression pact for 25 years and a guarantee of its borders, not entirely convincing enticements given Hitler's recent record. Yet even after the inevitable rejection, Hitler still believed the Poles could be won round. On 30 January 1939, in the same speech to the Reichstag in which he famously 'prophesied' the annihilation of Europe's Jews in the event of world war, he continued to emphasize the friendship between the two nations. It was only when it became absolutely clear that he had miscalculated, and that neither threats nor inducements would work, that Hitler finally changed course. The decisive Polish rejection of German demands in late March 1939 and the subsequent British guarantee to Poland (itself a response to Hitler's renewed aggression against the Czechs) were followed in April by the order to prepare for the invasion of Poland and the public renunciation of the non-aggression pact.[12] This does not mean the Poles were to blame for their fate – it was Hitler's unreasonable expectation that Poland would meekly allow itself to be

reduced to a satellite that explains the fury with which he reacted to his failure.

In one sense, Hitler thus returned to the mainstream of German opinion. As he admitted to his generals on 22 August 1939, ‘My Polish policy hitherto was contrary to the views of the people’. However, his new course was far more radical than the mainstream’s desire for the restoration of the territories lost in 1919. Rather, Poland’s unwillingness to acquiesce to a supporting role in Hitler’s designs for Lebensraum further east now made it a target of those same designs. The most striking indication of this reversal came a day later with the signing of the Nazi-Soviet Pact: instead of dividing the USSR in collaboration with Poland, Germany would do the opposite. Hitler was now committed to a war of racial conquest, one whose methods, reflecting the inherent violence of the Nazi worldview, had little room for notions of ‘civilizing’ the peoples of the East. He made this explicit in the same monologue – or rather two monologues (there was a lunch break) – of 22 August:

> Close your hearts to pity. Act brutally. Eighty million people must obtain what is their right. Their existence must be made secure. The stronger man is right. The greatest harshness.

Whilst it may be an exaggeration to say that it was the impending war that engendered a specifically Nazi anti-Polish racism rather than the other way round, it was undoubtedly what gave terrifying focus and shape to previously amorphous and seldom expressed views of Poles as one of many supposedly inferior peoples.[13]

The invasion itself brought a further hardening and radicalization of such beliefs, as seen in the reactions of Hitler and Goebbels recorded above. It was not only Nazi leaders whose encounter with the East took the form of an immense culture shock. Countless letters home from ordinary soldiers used similar language. Poland, wrote one, was 'the land of the Jews, in which whoever travels will be visited by lice' whilst another concluded, after meeting these 'beasts in human form', that anyone 'who was not yet a radical opponent of the Jews must become one here'. Poles too were stereotyped, with a particular focus on villages 'knuckle deep in squalor' and 'the unbelievably bad roads' as evidence of 'how backwards the culture of the nation' was.[14] Of course, such comments revealed in part an absorption of the images peddled by the regime. This was clearly the case in attitudes towards Jews, but the impact of Nazi propaganda with regard to Poles was more ambiguous. Goebbels did indeed push virulently anti-Polish messages prior to the invasion, including the accusation, made without any apparent sense of irony, that Poland was a threat to European peace which did not respect international law. Yet given the relatively short period of time in which the German population was exposed to this nonsense, it may plausibly be argued that soldiers' attitudes reflected more the impact of the deep-rooted anti-Polish stereotypes which pre-dated the Nazi era.[15] That said, these pre-existing prejudices undoubtedly acquired a more radical edge, in both word and deed, during the course of the campaign.

One reason for this, and an area where Nazi propaganda did play a more direct role, was in the nature of the war itself. Many Germans were shocked by the tenacity of the Poles, a feeling reflected in press directives issued by

Goebbels, which sought to depict the Polish struggle as senseless, a symptom of an ingrained national insanity. Alongside this, the Nazis transformed the common Weimar depiction of the Pole as criminal threat to international harmony into the even starker image of the Pole as murderer. This followed a series of incidents in which Polish soldiers, and sometimes civilians, had killed or maltreated ethnic German residents of the western provinces, seeing in them a Nazi fifth column (a fear not always without foundation). The most notorious of these incidents occurred in Bydgoszcz (Bromberg in German) on the 'Bloody Sunday' of 3 September when retreating Polish troops killed more than 100 local Volksdeutsche. By November 1939 the number of victims of the 'Bromberg outrages' had been inflated to 5,800 and then, in February 1940, apparently on Hitler's orders, to 58,000. In reality, around 4,000 ethnic Germans in total were killed by Polish violence during the September campaign but, as always in politics and war, perception counted for more.[16]

This in part explains the extraordinary brutality with which many Polish and Jewish civilians were treated during the conflict, as in Częstochowa, the site of Polish Catholicism's holiest shrine and later the GG's westernmost city, where at least 300 people were shot by the Wehrmacht on 4 September after reports of attacks on German soldiers. A similar fate befell many prisoners of war, most notoriously near the village of Ciepielów on 8 September when approximately 300 POWs were shot, again in a supposedly retaliatory action. However, it is evident that many of the atrocities perpetrated during the conflict formed part of a premeditated programme of violence planned in the weeks before the invasion through the creation of special SS units, known as Einsatzgruppen, armed with lists of tens of

thousands of Poles to be arrested and orders to combat ‘anti-German elements’ behind the front line. It was always likely that this would entail slaughter once the campaign was under way. Reinhard Heydrich, Himmler’s deputy and the man responsible for the Einsatzgruppen, was reported on 8 September to have demanded the immediate execution without trial of suspects: ‘The little people we want to spare, but the nobility, the priests and Jews must be killed.’[17] Such comments set the tone for an upsurge in violence in the following weeks which represented the crossing of an important moral threshold on the path to mass murder.

Even at this stage, however, it was by no means certain that the war marked the end of Poland. The return of the former Prussian provinces was a given but the fate of the remaining territory was clearly not decided before or even during the September campaign. Hitler’s rapid succession of conquests over the next year would give the process of Nazi empire-building an aura of inevitability, but it is important to remember that the Polish conflict was the Third Reich’s first war (if not act of aggression). In this context, Hitler still faced an uncertain and potentially threatening international situation, meaning that the attitudes of the Western powers and the Soviet Union would figure in his thinking. Furthermore, it was not clear until late September precisely which Polish territory would remain in German hands. The secret protocol to the Nazi-Soviet Pact had established a provisional demarcation line along the Narew, Vistula and San rivers which turned out to be rather different to that eventually agreed.[18]

The situation was further complicated by the still unexplained failure of Stalin to immediately occupy eastern

Poland, leaving open the possibility of greater German gains than originally expected: by mid-September the Wehrmacht had marched deep into the proposed Soviet zone. At the same time, Hitler, not unreasonably in the light of previous experience, still entertained the hope that Britain and France might be open to a negotiated solution. At a conference on board Hitler's train on 12 September 1939, three options were considered: a new partition of Poland along the demarcation line agreed with the USSR, the creation of a quasi-autonomous rump Polish state (*Reststaat*), or the subdivision of this remnant to create an independent west Ukrainian state from the Galicia region of south-eastern Poland.[19] This latter option was always unlikely, both because Galicia had been earmarked for the Soviets and because Stalin would hardly favour any form of Ukrainian statehood, and was effectively precluded by the Red Army's belated invasion on 17 September. However, the concept of the *Reststaat* remained under serious consideration until early October.

An intriguing development in this respect was an admittedly unsubtle German attempt to persuade Wincenty Witos, leader of the peasant-based People's Party and thrice prime minister of Poland in the 1920s, to head a collaborationist government. Witos was arrested by the Gestapo on 16 September and offered freedom in exchange for his agreement, an offer which he refused. It is unclear at what level this approach was authorized but there undoubtedly were members of the Nazi bureaucracy seeking to create a puppet regime. Furthermore, a small minority of Polish politicians were open to such moves. The most notable was Władysław Studnicki, an outspokenly Germanophile conservative who had played a leading cooperative role during the previous occupation in the First

World War. Even after the creation of the GG, Studnicki bombarded various administrators and soldiers with memoranda for Polish-German collaboration against the USSR, despite his growing disillusionment with Nazi brutality.[20]

The question of Poland's future remained open even after the signing of the German-Soviet Friendship Treaty on 28 September 1939 which shifted the proposed border eastwards to the River Bug, giving Germany the GG's future Lublin district and the eastern portion of the Warsaw district in exchange for the Wilno region. As late as 6 October, a day after reviewing the German victory parade in Warsaw, Hitler made a final 'peace offer' to the West which held out the prospect of some truncated form of Polish state under German mastery. However, even before Chamberlain's rejection on 12 October, the prospect of the *Reststaat* had receded. On 10 October, some hours before he received Hitler's 'damning' verdict on the Poles, Goebbels noted: 'Poland is finished. No one talks about a restoration of the old Polish state any more.' Whilst the attitude of the West was clearly of significance, a crucial role was played by Stalin who made it clear that the USSR would not welcome any form of Polish state.[21]

Furthermore, as the campaign came towards its close, Hitler and the military had begun to establish administrative structures in Poland. As early as 25 September, with most Polish territory now in German hands, Hitler approved the creation of the Łódź and Kraków military districts in central and southern Poland, encompassing the territory of the future General Government. Alongside the military apparatus stood a Chief of Civil Administration (CdZ) for each district: Hans Frank in Łódź and the Austrian Nazi leader Arthur Seyss-Inquart in Kraków; Frank also had

overall authority for Poland as a whole. An embryonic German administration was thus developing by early October whose very existence increasingly precluded the survival of a Polish state. The Reich Interior Ministry actually drafted two bills – one for the incorporation of western and northern Poland into the Reich, the other for the creation of a 'General Government' in the remaining German-held territory – on the very same day that Hitler made his peace offer. The former bill was signed on 8 October; four days later, on 12 October, another Führer decree established the General Government with Frank as Governor General and Seyss-Inquart as his deputy.[22]

A further question remains: why, having rejected the *Reststaat* concept, did Hitler not continue the military administration as the Wehrmacht had expected? As he told Goebbels on 14 October, the 'military is too soft and eager to compromise. And the Poles understand only force.' These views were echoed in Łódź by Frank when he complained to the Propaganda Minister that the Wehrmacht was 'pursuing a milksop-bourgeois policy rather than a racially aware one'. Some officers had indeed expressed unease at the wave of murders perpetrated by the Einsatzgruppen, ethnic German vigilantes and even their own soldiers, but the army's leadership failed to offer effective resistance once it became clear that Hitler was supporting and encouraging the violence, perhaps thereby proving his point about their softness. Generally lacking interest in Poland once the conflict was over, they instead shifted to plotting against the French offensive Hitler was planning for November. Johannes Blaskowitz, the general left behind as commander-in-chief in the East, did mount a dogged campaign against the atrocities from November 1939 onwards but received little support from the high command. He was relieved of his post

in May 1940. With the army safely neutered, Hitler and Frank could proceed unencumbered by ‘milksop-bourgeois’ sentiment.[23]

What, then, was the General Government, or rather the General Government for the Occupied Polish Territories as it was originally called? This was a question which proved rather difficult to answer except in the negative, reflecting the GG’s hurried and unplanned creation: it thus consisted of those territorial leftovers considered so lacking in racial value or economic utility that absorption into the Reich was precluded. The consequent uncertainty was shown by an essay in the Baedeker by Dr Albert Weh, head of the office for legislation in Frank’s regime. The GG, Weh wrote, ‘is not incorporated into the German Reich’. Nor was it ‘a component territory of the Greater German Reich’ akin to the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia. It had its own administration which was officially independent of the Reich bureaucracy, its own currency and customs regulations, and borders with the incorporated territories to the west and north.[24]

‘The General Government is not the legal successor of the former Polish state’, added Weh. This was clearly true despite Frank’s reference on 25 February 1940 to the GG as a ‘homeland for the Polish people’. Indeed, in the very same speech, Frank argued that it should be the aim of the administration ‘for all time’ to prevent ‘the Polish nation from ever again so raising itself, that it could be a danger for Germany’. Even the very word ‘Polish’ was soon dropped from the GG’s title after the Foreign Ministry expressed concerns about the implications in international law of the phrase ‘for the Occupied Polish Territories’: from July 1940, it was known simply as the General Government.[25]

‘All in all therefore’, concluded Weh, ‘the General Government is a creation of its own stamp’, a political neologism without legal precedent. The quest for a more positive definition led to platitudes and circumlocutions, as in the greeting from the Governor General with which the Baedeker opened:

> For those travelling from the East to the Reich, the General Government is already a powerful, homely, charming entity, but for those travelling from the Reich to the East, it is already the first greeting of an eastern world.

Frank excelled himself in a meeting on 30 May 1940: the GG was ‘in the German sphere of influence, not in the form of a protectorate or any similar form, but in the form of a power structure of the German Reich that is clearly under German rule’. Eventually, a more succinct, if no less opaque, term was found, coined by Frank himself: ‘*Nebenland*’, the ‘neighbouring territory’ of the Reich. This prompted an astute American observer to comment that the ‘very expression is new to legal terminology and it most likely is another name for a colony’. The Governor General was on occasions honest enough to admit as much, as on 2 December 1939, when he described the GG as ‘the first colonial territory of the German nation’.[26]

A similar lack of clarity surrounded the question of the General Government’s borders. Hitler’s 8 October decree had already incorporated into the Reich a large share of Poland, stretching well beyond Germany’s pre-1914 frontier, through the creation of the new Reichsgaue of Posen (Poznań) and Danzig-West Prussia, and through annexation into the existing provinces of Silesia and East Prussia. When

Hitler then left the final boundaries between these incorporated territories and the GG open, he was essentially inviting a power grab by interested Reich authorities and the local Gauleiter who sought to seize as much potentially useful territory from the GG as they could. A particular bone of contention was Frank's original base of Łódź, Poland's second largest city and the centre of its textile industry. The fact that Frank remained in the city for the best part of a month after his nomination as Governor General was indicative of his hope that it would be in the GG, possibly even as the capital. As late as 7 November, during his first official meeting after arriving in Kraków, Frank took heart from a report that Göring supported his retention of Łódź. However, around this time, if not earlier, Hitler agreed to the incorporation of the city into Reichsgau Posen (later to be renamed Wartheland or Warthegau). Frank was similarly unsuccessful with the Dąbrowa Basin region around the city of Sosnowiec. This was the centre of Poland's coal industry and its loss was to have significant implications for the General Government. Still other territorial issues remained undecided. A decision on a proposal to create a separate Reichsgau Beskidenland from the mountainous southern regions of the GG was postponed until after the war. In the meantime, Arthur Greiser, the leader of the Warthegau, pressed for the annexation of the regions around Tomaszów Mazowiecki and Piotrków Trybunalski, which formed part of Łódź's hinterland. In this case Frank was successful, although disputes continued into 1941.[27]

In fact, everything about the General Government was provisional – it was a genuine *Saisonstaat* whose very existence remained in doubt for some time. On 30 May 1940, Frank confessed that Hitler had told him in early October 1939 'that he wanted to secure this territory as a

rump territory for the Polish people, as a sort of rump state which we would then one day give back to the Polish nation'. Hitler had changed his mind by early November, according to the Governor General, but uncertainty remained. On 2 March 1940 Frank was even discussing the possibility that the GG would be 'a subject of negotiation in the coming peace settlement', adding rather implausibly that 'the General Government plays a colossal role in the meetings of President Roosevelt'. Even less convincing was the assertion that it would serve as a 'proud example of the mild and noble treatment of the Polish people' in these debates. It was only after the fall of France that the future seemed more secure. Following a meeting with Hitler in July 1940, Frank informed his officials of the dropping of 'for the Occupied Polish Territories' from the title of his domain. 'The new designation', Hitler had told him, expressed the fact that 'the General Government is and will remain for all time an essential component of the German Reich'.[28] In reality, however, the question of the GG's ultimate destiny was never fully resolved.

There appeared to be greater, not to say brutal, clarity regarding the policy aims to be pursued in the General Government. On 17 October 1939 Frank and other Nazi leaders were treated to a Hitler monologue in the Reich Chancellery in which the Führer set out his objectives. In the most detailed account of the speech, the notes taken by the head of the Wehrmacht Wilhelm Keitel,[29] Hitler began by telling the military that they should be grateful to be relieved of the administration of Poland. Having attempted his own definition of the GG – 'no part of the German Reich and also no administrative district of the Reich' – Hitler proceeded to set out his vision. The General Government

was not to be ‘a model province or model state’ and certainly would not be administered along Reich lines. In fact, the Reich ministries were not to interfere since all power was to be vested in Frank’s hands.[30] Poles would be allowed a role in the administration but would not be permitted to form any national political organization. In this context, the Polish intelligentsia was to be prevented from becoming a leadership class. Hitler did not elaborate on how this was to be achieved but the ongoing terror campaign could have left little doubt.

This reflected the envisaged role of the GG as a deployment zone for future military action (obviously Hitler was already thinking here of the USSR). The priority was therefore to secure the transport and communications systems. Otherwise, there was no intention to put the economy back on its feet. Indeed, ‘the “*polnische Wirtschaft*” must flourish’. As another account had it, ‘corruption and epidemics would be the order of the day’. The standard of living was to be kept low since the GG was to serve only as a labour reservoir; one summary noted that Hitler ‘needs from there only work slaves for Germany’.[31]

The General Government was also to be the scene of ‘a hard ethnic struggle which permits no legal restrictions. The methods will be incompatible with our other principles.’ In particular, it was to become a dumping ground, enabling the Reich to ‘cleanse’ itself of ‘Jews and Poles’ (some accounts have Hitler adding ‘riff-raff’). To this end, cooperation with the new Reichsgaue of Posen and West Prussia was permissible ‘only for resettlement’. ‘Shrewdness and harshness’ were to be the maxims in this struggle. The Germans were to encourage ‘total disorganisation’.[32] In short, the Reich should enable Frank ‘to complete this Devil’s work’.[33]

The message could hardly have been starker. Yet one did not need to be a genius (which was just as well) to realize that this was not a sufficient or even coherent programme. In the following months both the GG administration and various Reich agencies would come to see the impracticality of Hitler's plans, in particular the incompatibility between maintaining security on the one hand and impoverishment and persecution on the other. The General Government therefore saw constantly evolving policies which did not entirely adhere to Hitler's injunctions although it is arguable that the Nazis never achieved a clear strategy beyond recourse to terror and murder. Furthermore, developments within both the GG itself and the wider Nazi empire would, in due course, lead to further changes in the visions which Hitler and others articulated for it. The ideas of Frank in particular vacillated. The only constant was his ultimately unsuccessful attempts to prevent encroachments on his authority, whether by the Reich, other agencies in the GG or, indeed, by the people who lived there.

Who were these people? Given the destruction and population migrations caused by the invasion, the GG's exact population at the time of its birth is difficult to determine although it is generally believed to have been around 11.5 million, approximately one third of Poland's prewar population. In terms of ethnic composition, estimates for mid- to late 1940, by which time the population had rapidly increased, suggest that Poles constituted approximately 81 per cent of the more than 12 million inhabitants. Jews possibly numbered upwards of 1.3 million and Ukrainians somewhere above 500,000. By contrast, there were fewer than 100,000 native ethnic Germans although there were several hundred thousand

from the Reich, mostly soldiers, together with officials, police and assorted adventurers.[34]

The population was largely rural, with almost two thirds working on the land. Although Poland's two historic political and cultural capitals, Warsaw and Kraków, were located in the General Government, it possessed only seven of the 22 Polish cities with more than 50,000 inhabitants at the time of the 1931 census.[35] This reflected the fact that the GG was a literal rump state, comprising the supposedly racially worthless areas – less than 25 per cent of prewar Polish territory – which had not been incorporated into the Reich or the USSR. Nowhere were the consequences of this more apparent than in the economy. Interwar Poland had struggled to overcome problems inherited from the partition era, especially the absence of an integrated infrastructure (a legacy still evident today on cross-country train journeys). However, the situation in the General Government was far worse because it was cut off from the most important industrial centres such as Łódź and the Dąbrowa Basin, the loss of the latter leaving the GG almost completely dependent on the Reich for supplies of coal. The only remaining industries were to be found in Warsaw and in the Central Industrial District (COP), a development zone established in 1936 in response to the Depression and rural over-population. A number of armaments plants had been created in the COP around Kielce and Radom, a development not without significance in the occupation era. However, this was not sufficient to support an economy which was almost completely lacking in essential raw materials. Even in agriculture, the GG formed a food deficit zone: its predominantly small farms – 80 per cent were of less than 5 hectares – were insufficient to feed a growing population which was cut off from the traditional surplus

areas annexed to the Reich or the USSR.[36] The Nazis thus established an economy incapable of supporting itself. Naturally, this was attributed to '*polnische Wirtschaft*'.

The General Government also inherited a dislocated society. Interwar Poland's experiment with democracy had been characterized by a rapid succession of unstable governments which had ended in 1926 when Józef Piłsudski – Poland's Oliver Cromwell – had seized power. Piłsudski established a dictatorship, albeit a rather benign and initially popular one. However, the 1930s had seen growing political conflict in response to the creeping authoritarianism of Piłsudski's Sanacja regime, which increased after the marshal's death in 1935. Piłsudski's successors also adopted the integral nationalism of his radical right-wing opponents, exacerbating an already tense and often bloody stand-off with Ukrainian nationalists in the Galicia region whilst also pushing openly anti-Semitic measures. In 1937 the government had even given consideration to an absurd plan for Jewish migration to Madagascar, an idea fleetingly resurrected by the Nazis in 1940.[37]

The German invasion had engendered a mood of national unity but this had soon fragmented into recriminations and despondency after Poland's defeat and the flight of the old regime. The situation was compounded by the immense damage inflicted by the war. Across Poland as a whole, 66,000 soldiers lost their lives in the September campaign whilst tens of thousands of civilians fell victim to the fighting and, mainly in the incorporated territories, subsequent terror. In some areas of the countryside, around 20 per cent of the harvest had been destroyed. The damage was arguably at its greatest in Warsaw which had held out until 28 September. The casualties ran to the tens of thousands whilst more than 10 per cent of the city's buildings had

been reduced to ruins and another 41 per cent suffered significant damage. When Goebbels visited the city, he had observed that ‘this is Hell’. Taking one last drive through the streets through which people ‘creep like insects’, he judged Warsaw to be a ‘memorial to suffering’.[38] It was a description which would be ever more apt in the years that followed.

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2
‘Gangster Gau’
The regime

THE FATE OF WARSAW WAS FOREMOST IN HITLER’S THOUGHTS WHEN HE met Hans Frank in Berlin on the afternoon of 4 November 1939 to discuss their plans for the General Government. They agreed that the city – the political and symbolic heart of independent Poland – would not be reconstructed; rather, the ruination was to be furthered through the ‘pulling down of the castle’. Frank had already made a start on this task on 18 October 1939 when he visited the former seat of the Polish kings, which had been damaged during the fighting but not irretrievably so. Efforts by Polish engineers to save the building with a temporary roof were halted whilst Frank had ostentatiously removed the silver eagles from the canopy above the throne and pocketed them. Before his departure, the Governor General ordered the seizure of the castle’s interior furnishings, many of which, together with the table services and various household utensils, appear to have subsequently made their way to his court in Kraków. Following his meeting with Hitler, sappers began digging holes for explosives on 9 November whilst several hundred Warsaw Jews were press-ganged into demolishing the interiors. By February 1940, according to a later report from

the exiled Polish government in London, ‘the Castle was a mere ruin of gutted walls’. As it turned out, the building was not dynamited but it remained as a shell until 1944 when it, together with most of the city, was destroyed in the aftermath of the Warsaw Uprising.[1]

Another of Hitler’s prime concerns on 4 November had been ‘the transfer of art treasures’, a process that was much further advanced although not entirely in the form that the Führer may have hoped. Even before Poland’s final defeat, an undignified scramble had begun for a share of booty. Much of the theft was carried out by individuals seeking a source of easy profit: reports soon emerged in Warsaw of German officials selling artworks from the castle. The Wehrmacht did deploy art preservation units in an attempt to stem the robbery but they were soon overwhelmed as more powerful and better organized looters arrived from the Reich. At the head of the queue was Heinrich Himmler who dispatched a team of scholars from the Ahnenerbe, the Reichsführer’s thinktank of racist mystics and charlatans, with a prepared list of artefacts to be seized from Poland’s museums and private collections. One of the earliest targets was St Mary’s Church in Kraków, that high point of alleged German achievement celebrated by Baedeker. The crowning glory of the church’s interior was a magnificent altarpiece created in the late fifteenth century by Veit Stoss (Wit Stwosz in Polish), one of those classically central European figures who defied the glib racial categorizations of the Nazis. Shortly before the war began, the Poles had presciently split the altarpiece into 32 sections which were hidden at various locations across the country. Undeterred, the Ahnenerbe hunted down the pieces, some of which were transferred to Berlin as early as mid-October 1939. After representations by the mayor of Nuremberg, where Stoss

had begun his career, Hitler agreed to hand the altarpiece over to the city, although it required energetic interventions by Albert Speer to secure many of the fragments, one of which had been kept by Himmler himself. The work then languished in a vault in Nuremberg for the remainder of the war.[2]

Even greater damage was done by Hermann Göring, the Third Reich's plunderer in chief, who soon made good on Himmler's head start. On 6 October 1939 Göring charged the art historian Kajetan Mühlmann with the task of securing as many treasures as he could. Mühlmann's staff systematically combed Poland's museums, libraries and private collections, occasionally in cooperation but more often in fierce competition with Himmler's team. The latter were not wholly unsuccessful, especially in Warsaw where their haul included tens of thousands of books from the libraries of the Sejm (Parliament) and the Great Synagogue as well as dozens of stuffed animals and birds from the city's zoo. However, Göring's men secured the lion's share of the paintings and sculptures, helped by a tactical alliance with Frank against the SS. The works were then classified according to their assumed artistic merits, with minor pieces made available to GG officials for the adornment of their offices and private residences. More important works were reserved for the higher authorities.[3]

Mühlmann's greatest prize was the collection of the Czartoryski Museum in Kraków whose hiding place on the aristocratic family's estate in Sieniawa had swiftly been betrayed to the Germans. The core of the collection, one of Europe's greatest, was transferred to Berlin where Göring had it placed in the Kaiser Friedrich Museum despite the desire of Hitler's pet art historian Hans Posse to earmark it for the Führer's planned museum in Linz. However, to

Göring's fury, the three star paintings soon returned to Kraków at Frank's request, a reflection of Mühlmann's increasingly close, not to mention financially beneficial, relationship with the Governor General. The paintings were again sent to Berlin in advance of Operation Barbarossa but returned to the GG in late 1942. Each time, Mühlmann carried the works himself on the train.[4]

Frank was no connoisseur but he recognized the status accruing from the ownership of Rembrandt's *Landscape with the Good Samaritan* and Raphael's *Portrait of a Young Man*. Pride of place in his office suite was reserved for the most famous work of all even though it gave the Governor General's infant son 'the creeps'. Niklas Frank, whose scabrous memoir provides one of the finest portraits of any Nazi leader, recalled it as 'the one with the woman wearing what looked like a bandage around her head [...] carrying a little white animal in her arms that looked like a rat': Leonardo's *Lady with an Ermine*. Although Mühlmann felt obliged to reprimand Frank for hanging the painting above a radiator, he continued to serve as an unofficial art dealer until 1943, securing hundreds of paintings from across Europe. Frank also continued to extract art from Poland, as in the case of another appropriated Rembrandt presented to him as gift by the Gestapo or the 25 Canaletto views of Warsaw stolen from the ruined castle. He further used his ability to rule by decree to issue laws in late 1939 allowing for the confiscation of state and privately owned artworks. This was an attempt to give some semblance of legal authority to the robbery which had already occurred yet it was also a warning to competitors, notably Himmler who had issued his own similar decree. By March 1940, Frank was flaunting his alleged victory over the Reichsführer as an

exemplar of his success in defending the GG from external interference.[5]

These unedifying spectacles revealed much about the occupation regime in the General Government: its utter disregard for the wishes of the indigenous population, the often bitter competition between its various agencies, the use of public office for private gain, and the cloaking of robbery in a veneer of legality. Above all, perhaps, they highlighted the vanity and lust for power, or at least its trappings, of the Governor General.

Born in Karlsruhe in 1900, Hans Frank grew up in a respectable middle-class legal family in Munich.[6] Like many young men of his generation, he found himself drawn into far-right politics at the end of the First World War, following the well-worn path from the Freikorps and the Thule Society to the SA, which he joined in 1923, just in time for Hitler's abortive putsch. Although he was briefly estranged from the Nazis in the mid-1920s, he became the party's star lawyer, representing its members – including Hitler – in the numerous court cases which their activities generated. Following Hitler's accession to power, Frank was given responsibility for overseeing the liquidation of the regional justice systems, a duty he performed loyally. In the process, however, he effectively deprived himself of the other post he had been given in 1933, that of Bavarian Justice Minister. Frank later claimed that he had used his position in Bavaria to uphold the rule of law against the encroachments of the emergent police state. The exact truth of the matter cannot easily be determined, but Frank did register at least token protests against extrajudicial killings at the newly established Dachau concentration camp in 1933. Similarly, he initially objected to the murder of Ernst Röhm and other

SA leaders at Munich's Stadelheim prison during the Night of the Long Knives in 1934. These incidents established precedents for what would become recurring patterns during Frank's tenure in Poland: apparent stands on principle against Himmler and the police which could also be interpreted as assertions of personal prerogative (as a state prison, Stadelheim fell within his jurisdiction) and meek acceptance of Hitler's will once it became clear that Frank had backed the wrong horse. Even Frank's alleged offers of resignation, which he withdrew when Hitler rejected them, were repeated with rather tedious regularity in Kraków.

Following the abolition of the state justice ministries in 1934, Frank was made Minister without Portfolio, which gave him the status (and salary) of a Cabinet minister but little to do beyond the occasional sop to his vanity such as a mission to meet Mussolini in 1936. Disappointed not to have been appointed Reich Justice Minister, he sought instead to make himself the Grotius of the Nazi state. The chief vehicle in Frank's ambition to create a new legal philosophy for the new times was the Academy of German Law, which he had founded in 1933 and whose president he remained until 1942. The Academy was intended to function as a quasi-academic thinktank, complete with its own journal (edited by Hans Frank). However, given Hitler's contempt for both lawyers and the law, its practical influence on the regime was negligible. It was therefore something of a surprise when Frank – a loyal but marginal figure – was summoned from his service as a Wehrmacht reserve lieutenant in Potsdam to see Göring on 12 September 1939. Three days later he met Hitler, who offered him the position of Chief of Civil Administration for the whole of occupied Poland, a role which would in due course become that of Governor General.

Hitler's choice of Frank has sometimes been seen as a means of sidelining him; after all, the General Government, given the tasks the Führer set for it, was not the most immediately attractive posting. However, it can also be seen as a reward for a loyal if politically ineffective Old Fighter, a phenomenon often to be repeated in the East.[7] Yet Frank's appointment may also have reflected astute judgement on Hitler's part. As Niklas Frank put it:

> he knew what a sycophantic character you were. He knew that you were drooling for recognition and consequently you would go along with anything that came out of Berlin in the form of an order.

Superficially at least, such expectations proved unfounded for Frank frequently, as in the struggle over art, railed against interference in his domain whether by the Reich authorities or the police apparatus. In part, this reflected his attempt to cultivate the image of an enlightened despot, a pose he adopted in his proclamation addressed to 'Polish men and women!' on taking office on 26 October 1939 when he promised that Poles would be allowed to remain faithful to their traditions and to retain their Polish identity. Yet there was more to this apparent moderation than mere posturing. Frank, for all his faults, was an intelligent man and he soon came to realize that Hitler's policy of repression and privation would not, on its own, secure the Nazis' objectives. 'We can not after all kill 14,000,000 Poles', he told a meeting on 2 March 1940. Nor was 'systematic terrorization' an option, although Frank's explanation – 'we do not even have the people to establish such an apparatus' – was hardly reassuring. Six days later, he stressed that his regime had a responsibility to preserve the characteristic

ways of life of the ‘non-German tribes and nations’ as long as they were compatible with the Reich’s interests: ‘How else should other nations feel the desire to come under German protection!’ Throughout the occupation period, Frank showed himself capable of rational analysis of the problems of the General Government and the consequent need for a more nuanced policy towards Poles, if not Jews. As he bragged in July 1943, Hitler had dubbed him ‘the greatest political realist in the East’.[8] Characteristically, however, such realism seldom led to any practical change.

G. M. Gilbert, an American psychologist who interviewed Frank at Nuremberg, found that ‘tests showed him to be one of the most intelligent of the Old Fighters, as well as one of the most unstable emotionally’. A similar impression was gained by Curzio Malaparte, an Italian writer, who incorporated his experiences as a guest of Frank in 1942 into his novel *Kaputt*. Much of Malaparte’s account was highly fictionalized but he still caught something of the Governor General’s character, seeing in him ‘a will both vainglorious and uncertain’.[9] These observations may help to explain the vacillation between benevolent pragmatist and Nazi hardman which marked Frank’s words and deeds. Even in his 26 October proclamation, Frank had warned ‘political rabble-rousers, economic profiteers and Jewish exploiters’ that there would be no place for them in the GG. He even sometimes boasted publicly of the regime’s brutality, most infamously during an interview with a correspondent of the *Völkischer Beobachter* in February 1940. Asked to explain the differences between the GG and the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia, he commented on a recent high-profile execution:

> In Prague, for example, big red posters were put up, on which could be read, that today 7 Czechs were shot. Then I said to myself: if I wanted to allow a poster to be put up for every seven Poles shot, then the forests of Poland would not be sufficient to produce the paper for such posters.[10]

This thuggish aspect to Frank's self-image perhaps partly reflected the perceived need of a middle-class intellectual surrounded by men of violence to prove his toughness. However, it is also noticeable that his more forthright statements often followed meetings with Hitler. In this sense, Niklas's verdict on his father was correct. The Governor General appeared to offer proof of this in his Nuremberg cell when he told Gilbert that he had been 'seduced' by Hitler. Frank attributed this to his own ambition, but the American was probably correct in seeing some deeper emotional need at work (although Gilbert's assertion that this was 'latent homosexuality' perhaps said more about the psychology profession in the 1940s than it did about Hans Frank). Whatever the reason, Frank was clearly a man who was desperate for Hitler's approval. His erstwhile crony Karl Lasch told SS interrogators in April 1942 that each 'little token given him by the Fuehrer is immediately magnified a thousand fold'.[11]

When Lasch made this statement, he was facing the death sentence for his role in a scandal which almost brought down the Governor General himself. Abandoned by Frank, Lasch had every reason to paint a negative portrait of his mentor yet much of his account rings true, not least the assertion that

> Cabinet meetings do not consist of deliberations but of lectures, with much affectation, about fictitious conditions, and conclude with a long monologue by Frank, praising the achievements of the Governor General in all strains.

The veracity of this claim may be gauged by perusing a single sentence from a speech with which Frank opened a conference on police matters on 30 May 1940. After recalling Hitler's original intention to give the GG back to the Poles one day, he continued:

> But not least under the influence of the reports, that gradually were received from the country about the possibilities in agriculture policy, industrial connections, about the possibilities of a great German colonizing activity, further also under the impression of the circumstances, that the real Polish people, namely the workers and peasants, were essentially willing to work under a strong hand, under the influence of all of these reports, the Führer then said to me – and I recall it as if it were today, it was at the beginning of November: We want to keep the General Government, we are never giving it away.[12]

Such verbosity was recorded in an official diary which eventually stretched to 38 volumes, full of often ridiculously pedantic and banal detail. Frank's diaries have proved to be of immense value to historians yet they also stand as a monument to his vanity and pomposity.

In fact, these traits characterized his entire reign in Poland. A notable example of Frank's ostentation came in 'the big dinners with many, many courses' which Lasch

recalled. Even in the winter, ‘dinner at the Castle with meat, magnificent salads, fruit, and dessert was always a feast’. Malaparte, who sampled these banquets, was particularly struck by the appearance of Frank’s wife Brigitte, ‘wrists aglitter with gold bracelets, with hands bejewelled with rings that fitted her too tightly and sunk deeply into the flesh’. Brigitte, whose son would later imagine her ‘as some enraged figure in a George Grosz caricature’, was as desperate as her husband for status and material possessions. The marriage was by this time a loveless one in which both partners cheated. Brigitte was even rumoured to have had an affair with Lasch, who also allegedly shared a mistress with the Governor General. Frank attempted to divorce his wife in 1942–3 but with as much success as his regular resignation offers to Hitler. In May 1942 he even went so far as to reveal his complicity in the Holocaust in an effort to shock Brigitte into leaving him, but to no avail. Ultimately, the couple were united by their pursuit of a lavish lifestyle which Lasch characterized as ‘running round from castle to castle in a magnificent carriage with guards of honour, books, music, plays, and banquets’. The phrase ‘castle to castle’ was significant here for Frank proved as adept in accumulating palaces as he did in acquiring artworks, appropriating the Belweder in Warsaw (Piłsudski’s former residence) and the Krzeszowice (Kressendorf) seat of the Potocki family to add to the Wawel and his Bavarian residence on the Schliersee. He also maintained a love nest in Munich for his first sweetheart Lilly Grau with whom he resumed a relationship in 1942. All of his residences were refurbished in a suitably lavish style, notably the Wawel where a private cinema was fitted.[13] As the Baedeker indicated, such treats were off limits to all but a select few.

As Governor General, Frank headed the entire civil administration in the GG,[14] and had the power to legislate by decree. He largely marginalized his nominal deputy Seyss-Inquart, partly because of the latter's close links to the SS, so much so that the Austrian actively sought a transfer. However, Seyss-Inquart still proved useful, after his appointment as Reichskommissar for the Netherlands in May 1940, by assisting the Governor General in his art dealings: money was siphoned off from the GG administration and sent to the Netherlands, where Seyss-Inquart deposited it in an account from which Mühlmann drew to purchase paintings and other collectibles for Frank.[15]

Even before Seyss-Inquart's departure, the real second power in the civil administration was Josef Bühler, a former public prosecutor who had served in Frank's government offices from 1933 onwards. Bühler was a rather anonymous character – Lasch described him as 'lacking in any creative power' – but he was a capable administrator and, crucially, loyal to Frank.[16] Originally given the title of Chief of the Office of the Governor General, Bühler was made State Secretary of the GG in March 1940 and became Frank's official deputy following Seyss-Inquart's departure in May.[17] In these roles, he presided over the government bureaucracy from its headquarters in Kraków's former mining academy. Bühler created several sub-departments within the State Secretariat which oversaw such important issues as trade and price control, but otherwise the regime was modelled on the Reich ministries, with 12 departments (later 14) responsible for areas such as finance, justice and labour.

At a provincial level, the GG was divided into four districts: Kraków, Radom, Warsaw and Lublin. Each was

headed by a governor (originally district chief) who served as a miniature version of Frank, with a similar, if smaller, bureaucratic structure. As the appointment of Bühler demonstrated, the Governor General liked to surround himself with acolytes and this was reflected in the choice of two of the governors, both of whom had worked with Frank in the Academy of German Law. The Academy's director Lasch – whom Frank nicknamed his 'blond rascal'[18] – was given Radom whilst Ludwig Fischer was sent to Warsaw, where he would prove to be the only governor to stay in the same post throughout the occupation. The other governors were Old Fighters. Kraków went to Otto Wächter, another doctor of law but also an Austrian Nazi who had played a leading role in the abortive putsch of 1934. The first governor of Lublin was Friedrich Schmidt, like Wächter an SS man, but he soon left to be replaced by Ernst Zörner, an old associate of Hitler and Goebbels and former mayor of Dresden.

The districts were in turn divided into sub-districts, known as Kreise, each headed by a Kreishauptmann (collectively Kreishauptleute) – the title was taken, like that of the General Government itself, from earlier Habsburg practice in southern Poland.[19] There were initially 40 Kreise, although the numbers fluctuated even before the addition of Galicia in 1941 brought the total to 56.[20] The General Government's six largest cities – Warsaw, Kraków, Częstochowa, Lublin, Radom, Kielce – were each governed by a Stadthauptmann, as was Lwów from 1941. The Kreis- and Stadthauptleute were the backbone of the German administration, with wide-ranging responsibilities over political and economic life within their areas. At the small town or village level, administration largely remained in the hands of Poles or Ukrainians.

This pyramidal system of government was officially held together by the principle of ‘unity of administration’, Frank’s contribution to Nazi bureaucratic theory which he hoped would become a model for the Reich. Put simply, this meant that all authority at any given level was concentrated in the hands of its chief administrator, namely the Governor General, the governor or the Kreishauptmann. Ultimate power belonged to the Governor General, who was accountable only to Hitler under the terms of the 12 October 1939 decree which created the GG. On the face of it, this was nothing more than the application of the basic Nazi idea of the Führerprinzip. However, Frank’s aim was to avoid the chaos of competing jurisdictions which characterized the reality of government in the Reich. Therefore, each administrative chief was to ensure that the individual departments were subordinated to his authority. More importantly, there was to be no interference by any agencies in Berlin. As Frank never ceased to point out, he had been given sole authority by Hitler.

One area in which Frank was successful was in avoiding the party-state dualism of the Reich since he was the head of the Nazi Party in the GG. Likewise, each governor led the party in his district with the exception of Lublin which, as will be seen, represented a special case in the history of the General Government. A more immediate challenge to the aim of unity of administration came from the Wehrmacht, which continued to play an important role even after the termination of the military administration on 26 October 1939. This was primarily a result of the acute shortage of personnel which afflicted the GG in its earliest months, particularly in the more remote rural Kreise where the army remained the principal German authority until the spring of 1940. Although it was therefore essential in establishing

basic administrative structures and achieving some semblance of order, Frank perceived the army as a threat to his autonomy and was irritated by Blaskowitz's complaints against the brutality of the occupation. The Governor General was ultimately largely successful in sidelining the Wehrmacht, initially through his appointment as Reich Defence Commissioner in December 1939 and then through Blaskowitz's removal in May 1940.[21]

A more serious threat was posed by the assorted Reich authorities which were supposedly excluded by unity of administration. Although Hitler had stressed Frank's sole authority at the meeting on 17 October 1939, he had, typically, already undermined it by giving Göring, as head of both the Ministerial Council for Reich Defence and the Office of the Four Year Plan, the power to issue his own decrees. In addition, the GG's budget had to be approved by the Reich Finance Ministry whilst the Ostbahn (railways) and post were overseen by their Reich equivalents. Frank had unwittingly invited further interference by modelling his departments on those of the Reich, which inevitably encouraged the Berlin ministries to see them as their subordinates. Much of Frank's first year in office was therefore spent attempting to stave off, with some success, such outside influences. The most important stage in this process was a series of agreements made with Göring in late 1939 and early 1940 whereby the Governor General was made representative for the Four Year Plan, as well as Reich Defence Commissioner. This gave Frank some measure of control over economic and defence policies, but only by accepting Göring's autonomous power. For example, the GG's Office of the Four Year Plan, established in January 1940, was superior to and independent of the relevant authorities in Frank's administration (the departments of economics, finance, food

and agriculture, and labour, as well as Bühler's office of price control). Frank was thus able to achieve some measure of limitation on external pressures not through the clear, unified administrative structure he was aiming for but through the concentration of multiple offices in the hands of one individual, in this case himself, which so characterized the Third Reich in general.[22]

No Nazi was ultimately so successful in building up power in this way as Heinrich Himmler, and it was the Reichsführer-SS who was to prove the most consistent and effective rival to Frank. Himmler's agencies had been heavily involved in the pre-invasion planning, as attested to by the role of the Einsatzgruppen during and after the September campaign. Even before the final fate of the occupied territories had been decided, Himmler had launched a bid for control of racial and security policy in Poland which culminated in his appointment as Reichskommissar for the Strengthening of Germandom (RKFDV) on 7 October 1939 (his thirty-ninth birthday). Under the terms of Hitler's decree, Himmler was given responsibility for 'Germanizing' the East, primarily envisaged at this time as meaning the incorporated Polish territories rather than the GG, through the settlement of ethnic Germans. However, Hitler also gave him the task of ensuring 'the elimination of the harmful influences of such alien sections of the population that constitute a danger for the Reich and the German community'. This latter role would have rather more immediate implications within the General Government.[23]

Himmler had asserted his authority even before his appointment as RKFDV with the creation of the post of Higher SS and Police Leader (HSSPF) East on 4 October to control all SS and police forces within the future General

Government. The man chosen for this role was Friedrich Wilhelm Krüger, a relatively colourless figure by the standards of his peers who had held senior positions in the SA before the Night of the Long Knives, after which he rose through the SS apparatus.[24] In many respects, Krüger's role in the history of the GG was to be overshadowed by that of one of his theoretical subordinates, Odilo Globocnik, the SS and Police Leader (SSPF) of the Lublin district (and its NSDAP chief). On the whole, the relationship of the SSPFs to Krüger was akin to that of the governors to Frank. However, Globocnik was a force of nature who answered to only one master – Himmler – to whom he showed what has been termed 'positively doglike devotion'.[25] Hailing from the Carinthia region of Austria, Globocnik had a history of violent involvement in far-right politics and served four jail sentences in the 1930s.[26] He had been rewarded for his sacrifices for the Nazi movement with appointment as Gauleiter of Vienna following the Anschluss. However, this tenure had been marked by an abrasive style of leadership, together with accusations of incompetence and embezzlement which led to dismissal and an ongoing party investigation into a missing sum of RM 650,000, which was only stopped by Himmler's intervention in 1941. The Reichsführer had saved Globocnik's career in 1939, following his Viennese humiliation, by inviting him to join his personal staff. This was one reason for the Austrian's loyalty, but there also seems to have been a degree of personal affection between the two men, reflected in Himmler's use of the pet name 'Globus'. They were further united by a fanatical racism and commitment to violence, which Globocnik would deploy in the Lublin district with devastating and tragic consequences.

SSPFs had first been created by Himmler in the Reich in an attempt to bring order to his sprawling police empire, although in practice lines of authority could easily become lost in a maze of acronyms. In simple terms, Krüger and the SSPFs controlled both the Security Police (Sipo) and Order Police (Orpo), although these institutions retained links to their respective headquarters in Berlin.[27] The Sipo consisted of the Gestapo and the criminal police which were under the ultimate leadership of Reinhard Heydrich, as was the SD (Himmler's intelligence service). However, despite the well-known involvement of these institutions in Nazi crimes,[28] it was actually the Orpo which played a much more significant role – in the GG and the wider Nazi East – due to its numerical superiority: as late as November 1942, there were only 2,000 German Sipo men in the whole of the General Government compared to 12,000 for the Orpo. The principal permanent uniformed forces were the regular urban police and the more numerous rural Gendarmerie. However, the bulk of police manpower was provided by paramilitary police battalions made up of career policemen, volunteers and conscripted reservists. These battalions, whose tours of duty in Poland varied in length, were generally deployed wherever deemed necessary and made up around 80 per cent of all Orpo personnel in the GG. Even they were insufficient to maintain order, so the Germans also found themselves forced to rely on indigenous forces. The November 1942 reports to Frank on police numbers included 12,000 regular Polish police (known as the blue police from the colour of their uniforms), 3,000 Polish criminal police and 1,500 to 1,800 Ukrainian auxiliary police.[29]

Although there was no love lost between Frank and Himmler, there was initially a degree of cooperation between the Governor General and Krüger's police

apparatus. It is true that Frank had issued a decree on his first day in office subordinating all SS and police to his authority and requiring his approval for significant orders. It is equally true that Himmler and Krüger promptly chose to ignore this. However, on 31 October 1939 Frank then issued a new decree 'for the combating of violence' [*sic*] which gave Krüger more or less unlimited power to act as he saw fit in the interests of preserving security in the GG. This reflected the fact that Frank was still struggling against the 'milksop-bourgeois' attitude of the Wehrmacht in his effort to carry out Hitler's instructions. However, cooperation soon broke down to the extent that Frank complained at Nuremberg that Krüger did not follow 'even a single order'.[30] This claim was clearly a defence strategy, but it was nonetheless true that the Governor General found himself fighting what was increasingly a losing battle to bring the police to heel.

It was an early attempt to overcome the personnel shortage and consequent dependence on Poles that provoked the first major conflict. Himmler decided to create an auxiliary police force known as the Selbstschutz from the GG's small ethnic German population: by April 1940, 12,600 men had been recruited. Their duties were mundane for the most part, but Frank objected to the raising of units under SS control, especially at a time when the Kreishauptleute needed police personnel of their own for basic local security duties. More alarming were the reports emerging from Lublin, where Globocnik had turned the district's Selbstschutz into a personal army with which he proceeded to terrorize the Jewish population and Polish villagers. Frank certainly did not oppose violence on principle but he saw these chaotic methods as counter-productive. It also seemed as if Globocnik was attempting to create a private

fiefdom, especially as he was at the centre of a related dispute over control of Jewish forced labour in 1940. In the meantime, Frank had sought to develop his own auxiliary force of ethnic Germans, known as the Sonderdienst, under the exclusive control of the civil administration. After months of arguments, the Governor General and Krüger reached an agreement in July 1940 whereby the Selbstschutz would be dissolved, with some members transferred to Frank's new force. Globocnik, in a sop to his ego, would supervise training and recruitment through an academy in Lublin. However, Globocnik continued to be obstructive and there were frequent complaints regarding the quality of the men he supplied for the Sonderdienst as well as their lack of uniforms and equipment. Eventually, in a fit of pique, Globocnik asked Frank to relieve him of supervision over the operation in late 1940, ostensibly a victory for the Governor General (although this was not to be the last of the matter). In the following years, the Sonderdienst proved to be the core of the German forces at the Kreis level if not quite to the degree Frank had hoped: they numbered only 3,000 in November 1942, 75 per cent of whom were reported not to have mastered the German language.[31]

This incident highlighted the manner in which the General Government, despite the talk of unity of administration, came to resemble the polycratic stereotype of the Reich with its overlapping competencies and frequent disputes over authority. These disagreements were not merely between the civil administration and the SS or between the GG and the Reich. Globocnik's wilful refusal to abide by Krüger's agreement with Frank showed that conflicts could arise within institutions, even the supposedly disciplined SS apparatus. Rivalry could be found everywhere: between

departments in Kraków, between the central administration and the districts, between the governors and the Kreishauptleute, between Globocnik and everybody.[32]

Even more so than in the Reich, the absence of clear structures of authority encouraged independent initiative, especially at the local level. On the one hand, Frank urged the Kreishauptleute, as the chief representatives of the chimera of unity of administration, to assert themselves in all areas of policy. On the other, the sheer deluge of orders emanating from Kraków in the earliest months of the regime, at a time when the Kreishauptleute lacked the personnel to adequately implement them, and the competing demands of different agencies encouraged a pattern of improvisation which would become the norm. These ostensibly contradictory tendencies served to create a system in which the personality and attitudes of the Kreishauptleute were crucial. They became, in short, literal little Hitlers whose whims could mean the difference between life and death for the people over whom they ruled. A great many used their positions to push radical measures, in areas such as Jewish policy and the collection of food quotas, which often exceeded those of the SS.[33]

The radicalism of many members of the civilian authorities should caution against overstating the extent of conflict within the regime. Despite the constant bickering over authority, most of the occupiers shared certain characteristics. This was particularly true in the localities where a basic fact of life was the paucity of Germans. Whilst this might have facilitated the emergence of petty jealousies, it also engendered a sense of solidarity. After all, these were men (and sometimes women) hundreds of miles from home in an alien environment where few spoke the

language. Increasing Polish resistance from 1942 onwards further encouraged concentration in the towns where the local Deutsches Haus, a de facto colonial club, was the centre of social life for the small German community. Even in the cities, Germans tended to isolate themselves, as Zygmunt Klukowski discovered when he visited Lublin in August 1940: the city's two best cafes now refused to admit Poles. Indeed, the administration frowned on non-professional relationships with the native peoples. A memorandum from Bühler in April 1940 warned against any social intercourse with Poles and Jews of either sex, meaning not only 'intimate relationships' but even community dances or invitations to dinner.[34]

This is not to say that such interactions did not occur, yet there was always an unequal power relationship, as in Jasło (Kraków district) where the Kreishauptmann Walter Gentz and his cronies established an alcohol-sodden culture of sexual predation towards Polish, Jewish and even German women.[35] The prevailing master-race mentality was perhaps best expressed by Fritz Cuhorst, the first Stadthauptmann of Lublin, in December 1939: 'we have decided to behave, as officials, exactly the other way round than at home, that is, like bastards'.[36] The racism that permeated the occupation regime was most obviously demonstrated with regard to the GG's Jews. Ernst Gramß, a member of the Warsaw district administration and later the Kreishauptmann of Sokołów, wrote to his wife on his arrival in 1939 that Warsaw's Jewish district was 'a disgrace' full of 'criminal faces' before offering 'a thought: extermination, it would be a blessing for mankind'.[37]

Such attitudes were hardly surprising given the background of most officials. Almost all of the Kreishauptleute were members of the Nazi Party and a

majority of them had joined before 1933 (although few could match Gramß's record of service dating back to the Beer Hall Putsch). In fact, the proportion who had joined prior to Hitler's accession to power (54.63 per cent) was almost double that for the Landräte (the nearest equivalent officials in the Reich), appearing to bear out the hope expressed by Frank on 28 October 1939 that the men who came to the GG would be 'only pure, active National Socialist fighters'.[38] However, this was not quite achieved in the manner intended.[39] Although Frank had been encouraged by an initial wave of applications for posts, this soon dried up. In particular, it proved difficult to attract officials to the rural Kreise, which offered few amenities to compensate for a monotonous and often hostile environment. Frank was able to secure some professional civil servants from the Reich and the Protectorate but they were often the most unpopular or incompetent – the General Government became a dumping ground not just for the Reich's racial undesirables but also its unwanted officials. The situation was made worse by a relatively high turnover, initially due to the recall in early 1940 of officials appointed by the military administration and later as a result of Wehrmacht conscription or simple disappointment with life in the East. Difficulties were further enhanced by the tendency of the central administration in Kraków to keep the better officials for itself, especially the numerous lawyers who followed Frank.

The General Government thus saw a process of negative selection: not Frank's model officials but whoever was available. Although the majority were university-educated professionals, typically with backgrounds in the bureaucracy, law or business, they hardly represented an elite. In addition to the Reich's cast-offs, acquaintances of

senior figures filled many important posts, as demonstrated by Frank's nomination of Bühler, Lasch and Fischer. There were also volunteers whose enthusiasm was typically accompanied by less desirable traits. Some were Nazi hardliners like Gramß looking for the chance to lord it over the inferior peoples of the East. Others were men with frustrated ambitions who saw the chance of higher status and a greater degree of power than they could possibly hope for at home. Dietrich Troschke, an economist posted in Rzeszów, commented on the 'extraordinary opportunities':

> Out here, someone who was just a small cog in the administrative machine back home, dutifully performing his daily tasks in return for a modest salary, suddenly found himself in charge of a whole department or government agency, far better off financially, and with ten times the responsibility.[40]

As Troschke suggested, material inducements may well have been a factor – officials in the GG received extra allowances – but even the less ideologically committed knew that radicalism was key to advancement in the Nazi system.

A further incentive to extremism was the fact that for a fair number of officials service in the GG represented a second chance after failure or scandal in the Reich. Both Frank and Globocnik fitted this pattern. The former saw the opportunity, after his career had stalled, to impress Hitler in the hope of advancing his ambitions of higher office. The latter sought rehabilitation following his disgrace in Vienna. Similar examples could be found throughout the administration. Some were simply criminals, such as Oskar Dirlewanger, a mentally unstable thug with a history of

embezzlement and a prison sentence for indecent behaviour with a 14-year-old girl. Himmler had taken Dirlewanger under his wing and placed him in charge of a special unit of convicted criminals which would play a role in many of the worst crimes committed in the General Government. Friedrich von Balluseck, a paedophile who served as Kreishauptmann of Tomaszów Mazowiecki and Jędrzejów, used his position to molest Polish children with impunity.[41]

Balluseck's case was extreme but nonetheless illustrates a wider phenomenon: many of the more dubious characters posted in the GG saw not so much a chance of redemption as an opportunity to continue their behaviour on a greater scale and with far fewer hindrances than at home. The only rehabilitation sought was in career terms, another incentive to radicalism. The personnel shortage meant that misdemeanours were seldom punished, with a blind eye turned to all but the worst offenders. One example was Josef Ackermann, an official in the Lublin city administration, whose misuse of his office for financial gain saw him simply moved to the Hrubieszów Kreis, where he was placed in charge of confiscated property! Even Balluseck was only removed in 1943, and then for relationships with Polish women, not children. His punishment was transfer to the Wehrmacht rather than prison.[42] The General Government was therefore predominantly staffed by people who for a variety of reasons – ideological commitment, hope of advancement, moral perversion – were inclined to racism and violence. They were also inclined, on a scarcely believable scale, to corruption.

The Nazi state was fundamentally corrupt but the absence of legal restraints, highly personalized administrative systems and fundamental lack of respect for the indigenous population made the GG notorious

throughout the Reich.[43] As early as February 1940, Ludwik Landau, a socialist economist, was recording in his diary that the ‘corruption of the Germans is indescribable’. Bribes could procure documents or exemption from forced labour or wearing the Jewish armband. Even the police could be bought: ‘for money one can get messages about the fate of the arrested; Gestapo agents who have been entrusted with the fight against speculators do business with them, etc.’ Karolina Lanckorońska, an aristocrat with close links to the Polish underground, likewise observed that for ‘a fat sum of money’ Gestapo agents would deliver parcels to prisoners or even release them. Corrupt policemen, or sometimes other Germans posing as them, even approached the desperate families of arrestees with the promise of their release. However, as Lanckorońska ruefully noted, once the ransom was paid, ‘as a rule, the Gestapo man was never to be seen again’. Bribery could equally take more mundane forms, as when Zygmunt Klukowski faced the threat of the requisitioning of his hospital’s livestock and possessions in 1943. Vodka and ‘a few pounds of good sausage’ were sufficient to secure papers protecting the hospital and ordering the return of items already taken. Even after almost four years of brutal occupation, Klukowski found that such methods, when directed at the appropriate German officials, were ‘able to solve everything.’[44]

Bribery was only one manifestation of what Karolina Lanckorońska termed ‘the extraordinary German sensitivity to the lure of material possessions, accompanied by a total lack of sensitivity to the means by which these possessions had been acquired’. This frequently led to outright plunder. ‘It was’, claimed one anonymous doctor, ‘like living in a country where all the thieves and gangsters had been let loose and the operation of the law entirely suspended.’ As

Lanckorońska explained, such behaviour was hardly surprising given that the Governor General 'did the same thing openly and officially'. The Franks proved to be prodigious accumulators of more than just Renaissance masterpieces and aristocratic mansions. Visiting the Wawel, Malaparte contrasted the 'royal bareness' he had encountered on a visit two decades earlier with the ostentation of Frank's court. The castle 'was now crammed full, from the subterranean caves to the top of its highest tower with furniture stolen from the palaces of the Polish gentry' along with the fruits of 'crafty raids through France, Holland and Belgium'. Brigitte's greatest weakness was furs. 'Ghettos had to be created', commented Niklas with typical acerbity, 'so that Mother could have all her tailors in one place.' An investigation in late 1941, following the arrest of a senior official in the Warsaw district administration, found warehouses full of furs, alcohol and luxury food items, allegedly for the Franks' use, which were acquired in the Warsaw ghetto for discount prices (paid for from state funds) or nothing at all. In addition, vast quantities of food, including 200,000 eggs whose whereabouts could not be determined, were taken for personal use from the Governor General's official residence at Krzeszowice. Large shipments of food, including the estate's entire fruit harvest, which Brigitte had had boiled and preserved, were sent to the family's homes in the Reich along with art and furniture.[45]

The Franks might have escaped any consequences had this investigation not coincided with the arrest of Karl Lasch's father in November 1941 after he had been caught attempting to smuggle carpets, spirits and much else into the Reich in an official car. Further examination led to the arrest of Lasch junior, now governor of Galicia, and revealed a pattern of misuse of public funds, the sale of state

property for private gain, and sexual adventures. Lasch's excuse – that everyone in the GG did the same – was not enough to spare him a death sentence, which was carried out in June 1942. Frank escaped a similar fate but was left significantly weakened by the Lasch affair as Krüger and Himmler exploited the Governor General's corruption to their advantage in the ongoing power struggle. However, the SS and police were far from clean themselves. Most obviously, Globocnik continued in his Viennese practices in Lublin but on a colossal scale after he was placed in charge of the largest plunder operation in history. Indeed, one of the characteristics of the Holocaust in the General Government, as elsewhere, was the shocking level of self-enrichment involved, despite Himmler's pious claims to the contrary.[46] Corruption permeated all levels of the administration, whether civil or police, belying the dated notion of the Nazi bureaucracy as a faceless machine concerned only with administrative efficiency. Not for nothing did wags in the Reich claim that GG stood for 'Gangster Gau'.

It was not only members of the regime who were on the make. The confiscation of former Polish state property along with that of many privately owned businesses led many Germans to see the General Government as a potential goldmine. The most famous, if ultimately untypical, example was Oskar Schindler, a failed entrepreneur and former spy from the Sudetenland, who came to Kraków in the hope of an easy profit. Another was Siegfried Kepper, an Old Fighter and farmer from East Prussia who moved to the GG after the invasion of the Soviet Union.

> He had heard that there were some beautiful hereditary estates in Poland which could be had

> practically for the asking. For the time being, these lands were administered by the German government, but later, after the war, they would be distributed either free or for a nominal sum to deserving private individuals. Kepper counted on being among these deserving persons.

He therefore set off for Kraków but with less success than Schindler, having for the time being to be content with managing an aristocratic estate west of the city where he lived in fear of partisans and a vengeful maid he had attempted to seduce. Kepper related his sorrowful story to another local estate manager, Bronisław Schatten, actually a highly assimilated Jew hiding out under the Polonized name Szatyn so successfully that the locals took him for an anti-Semite.[47]

Others were rather better placed to take advantage. Hugo Schneider AG (HASAG) was, like Baedeker, a Leipzig-based company which saw great potential in the General Government. Through good contacts with the Wehrmacht and adroit manoeuvring between competing institutions, HASAG was able to transform itself from a medium-sized concern in Germany to the key armaments producer in the GG, presiding over an ever growing number of factories which would, inter alia, play a role in the fate of the Jews of the Radom district. The company's German employees, who served as overseers and shop stewards, also benefited through promotion, free housing, and generous salaries and living allowances.[48]

Not everyone who served in the General Government was a failure or a freeloader. Yet even amongst more apparently respectable elements, certain prejudices were prevalent.

Numerous ‘experts’ – economists, agronomists, ‘racial anthropologists’ and so on – descended on the GG with ambitious plans for research and reconstruction which invariably took no account of the humanity of the inhabitants. One example was Helmut Meinhold, a youthful economist based at the Institut für deutsche Ostarbeit in Kraków, who saw Jews and much of the rural population as ‘dead ballast’ whose removal was essential to future development.[49] Whilst the influence of such planners, and the nature of their motivation, has been debated, the underlying racism inherent in their prognoses was clear.

Even apparently more innocent arrivals adduced similar attitudes, such as the activists of the League of German Maidens (BDM) who were sent to the GG from early 1941 onwards to oversee communal life and run kindergartens in ethnic German villages. Whilst their reports and diaries often ignored the Jewish and Polish populations (a telling comment in itself), some saw the need for a suitably pioneering spirit. One such case was a teacher in Galicia, praised by her superiors for her initiative, who addressed the endemic shortages afflicting the kindergartens by simply confiscating what she needed from the local community. Reporting in 1943 on a doll’s pram she had acquired for her charges, she curtly stated: ‘I found that in the ghetto.’[50]

Meanwhile, German doctors who were employed as public health officials generally treated the Polish population with contempt, attributing poverty and lack of cleanliness to ‘*polnische Wirtschaft*’ rather than to any structural problems or, indeed, to the effects of the occupation. It was taken for granted that Jews were a source of epidemics, leading doctors to play a prominent role in pushing for the creation of the Warsaw ghetto and, later, for its dissolution. An

apparent exception was Wilhelm Hagen, the chief medical officer for Warsaw from early 1941. Hagen became something of a hero in Polish historiography for his insistence on measures to provide Poles with proper protection against epidemics and for resistance to the Zamość Aktion. The doctor was, in many respects, a compassionate man, perhaps a reflection of his socialist past (one reason why he, with his career blocked in the Reich, ended up in the GG). Almost uniquely amongst German physicians, he had a reputation for a degree of decency in his dealings with Jews and he often argued for more food to control the death rates within the ghetto. Yet even Hagen could not escape certain prejudices, publicly arguing as late as 1973 that Jews were naturally prone to spotted fever and blaming them for not complying with German delousing procedures – as will be seen, there were good reasons for not doing so. Emanuel Ringelblum, whilst conceding that 'his attitude has been a generally humane one up to now', noted in April 1941:

> Dr. Hagen, when appealed to officially to provide milk for sucklings, replied: 'How dare the Jews make such a proposal when they can satisfy all their needs with contraband?'

In that same month, 2,061 people died in the Warsaw ghetto, 146 of them children.[51]

Hagen, like Oskar Schindler, at least offered moral ambiguity and some awareness of the fundamental criminality of Nazi rule in the General Government. However, the majority of those who served in the GG – whether bureaucrats, policemen, profiteers or men of science – were representatives of an inherently immoral

enterprise, a regime whose brutality was matched only by its venality.

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3

‘Gentlemen, we are not murderers’

Early measures

ALMOST TWO WEEKS AFTER OFFICIALLY ASSUMING HIS DUTIES AS Governor General, during which time he had tarried in Łódź and discussed artistic vandalism with Hitler in Berlin, Hans Frank finally arrived in his new capital on the evening of 7 November 1939. His was a suitably grand entry, culminating in a ceremonial tattoo in the Wawel. The most public element of the festivities was a torchlit procession to the castle from the Rynek Główny, Kraków’s central square and future Adolf-Hitler-Platz, which was festooned with Nazi flags for the occasion.[1] A day earlier, a rather more doleful parade had taken place just a few hundred metres away.

One of its unwilling participants was Henryk Batowski, a 32-year-old professor of Modern History at Kraków’s Jagiellonian University, the second oldest in central and eastern Europe. Batowski, together with the rest of the faculty, had been invited to attend a lecture in the Collegium Novum, the university’s main building, on the Third Reich’s relationship to scholarship and higher education. The lecture had generated great interest, so

much so that ‘there were present not only members of the active faculty, but also on the invitation of the Rector, some of the retired professors’. However, as he approached the Collegium Novum, Batowski noticed that ‘it was surrounded by armed, helmeted German policemen’, whilst plainclothes men checked documents. Once everyone was seated, ‘a tall man in SS-uniform’ entered the auditorium. The lecture began – and finished – shortly after noon:

> Gentlemen! You wanted to open the academic year without our permission. You had already initiated activities without our knowledge. This is proof of your anti-German feelings and of the traditional anti-German attitude of the university. We have to put a stop to this. All of you, women excepted, will be taken into custody and deported to an internment camp.

The speaker was Bruno Müller, Einsatzgruppe commander and newly appointed chief of the Gestapo in Kraków. Lecture over, the policemen pushed the academics at gunpoint into waiting lorries. The Germans also arrested a group of professors from Kraków’s mining academy attending a separate meeting in the Collegium Novum since their own building had already been requisitioned for use as the GG’s government headquarters. These unfortunates had been seized ‘despite the fact that they had nothing in common with our intention of opening the academic year; on the contrary, they had just decided not to follow our example’. In fact, the Germans took every man they could find in the building including ‘a few students who were accidentally present’. In total, 183 men were arrested.[2]

After initial internment in Kraków and then Breslau, 168 of the prisoners were sent on to Sachsenhausen concentration

camp outside Berlin. There they experienced ‘the severity of the first winter of the war, suffering from intense cold and malnutrition, from the brutality of the guards and some of the other prisoners’. Following international protests, the majority were freed in February 1940, but not before 12 academics had died in the space of just nine weeks. Four more died shortly after their release. In the meantime, Batowski, along with the other prisoners under 40 and the Jewish professors, remained in custody. Most were transferred to Dachau, where Batowski remained until December 1940. Others were not released until 1941.[3]

This operation – code named Sonderaktion Krakau – marked the effective start of an unrelenting war against the Polish intelligentsia waged throughout the General Government’s history, which would very quickly escalate to the use of rather more drastic measures than those employed against the Kraków professors. After all, claimed Frank on 30 May 1940, carting off prisoners to camps in the Reich brought ‘only troubles and unnecessary correspondence with the family members’. Far better for the authorities to settle the matter within the GG ‘in the way that is the simplest’.[4]

Such developments would seem unsurprising given the wave of violence which had accompanied and followed the invasion. By the end of 1939, perhaps as many as 50,000 civilians, 7,000 of them Jews, had died outside of combat in Poland, at the hands of the Einsatzgruppen, the Selbstschutz, the Waffen-SS and sometimes the Wehrmacht. The overwhelming majority of these murders occurred in the incorporated territories, primarily the new Reichsgaue of Danzig-West Prussia and Posen; by contrast, around 5,000

people were murdered in the territory of the General Government in this period.[5]

These lower figures did not make the terror any less real. Atrocities were common even before the GG's creation, especially in Warsaw where posters began to appear in mid-October announcing the execution of citizens judged to have been involved in anti-German activities. Predictably, Jews were targets across the future GG. The most notorious atrocities were committed by the Einsatzgruppe z.b.V. (*zur besonderen Verwendung* – 'for special purposes') under Udo von Woyrsch. Fresh from terrorizing the Jewish population of Silesia, the unit descended on Przemyśl on 16 September. Straddling the San river, the city would eventually be divided between the Germans and Soviets when the demarcation line was fixed. In the meantime, von Woyrsch's men attempted to encourage as many local Jews as possible to cross the San through a frenzied campaign of violence in which between 500 and 600 men were murdered in just four days. In the small town of Dynów, for example, at least a dozen were burned in the synagogue whilst another 60 were shot in a nearby forest. The climax to the operation was the round-up of 102 Jewish men from Przemyśl itself on 19 September, an event witnessed by Bronisław Schatten:

> When someone fell behind or broke pace, they beat the victim with the butts of their revolvers or with whips [...] The faces of the old Jews were contorted with pain, and the young boys were crying, but the Germans ran along the street almost joyfully, drunk with power.

By the afternoon, 'distraught, weeping women' were rushing to the Jewish cemetery where they encountered 'a scene

out of Dante's hell'. The men had been taken to a forest outside the city and machine-gunned before their corpses were dumped in the cemetery: 'Women with bloodied hands were hunting through the pile of bodies for their fathers, husbands, sons.'[6]

However, despite these horrors, many Germans initially strove for relatively correct relations during the military administration period. In Lublin, for example, universities, schools and theatres stayed open. Stefan Starzyński, the mayor of Warsaw who had overseen the heroic defence of the city, was allowed to continue in office. There was even a dance evening for Poles and Germans in the former capital. The senior German commander in Kraków, Eugen Höberth, visited Piłsudski's tomb in the Wawel whilst the city's first chief administrator Zörner (the future governor of the Lublin district) established a committee of prominent citizens to advise him.[7] Tadeusz Lehr-Spławiński, the university's rector, was a member of this committee, one reason why the professors had believed that they could press ahead with the new academic year which had been delayed due to the war. However, between 19 October, when the university senate took this fateful decision, and 4 November, when the traditional service marking the start of the new term was celebrated, the situation changed fundamentally.

The cause was the formal establishment of the General Government on 26 October, its immediate effects demonstrated by the arrest of Starzyński in Warsaw on the next day. After two months' imprisonment, the mayor was sent to Dachau where he died in 1943. It was the Sonderaktion Krakau, however, that properly marked the onset of a transition from primarily localized arrests and murders to more coordinated and systematic use of terror. In so doing, it represented a concrete manifestation of

Hitler's injunction that the Polish intelligentsia should not be allowed to occupy leadership positions within society. In the evolving Nazi anti-Polish racism, the mass of the population was seen as a 'people without culture', incapable of constructive action and suitable only for exploitation. It was the former elites that represented the real threat, precisely because they were supposedly drawn partly from the 'thin Germanic layer' that Hitler had discussed with Rosenberg in September. Paradoxical though this might have seemed, the very fact that there clearly were people in Poland capable of effective political leadership and organization was, for the Nazis, evidence that they possessed German blood, albeit diluted through the 'unsatisfactory [...] mingling' about which Hitler had complained to Goebbels.[8]

The issue was given greater urgency by the imminence of Poland's independence day on 11 November which the Germans feared would be an occasion for patriotic demonstrations. Although Frank may not have been involved in the decision to arrest the Kraków professors, a point he stressed at Nuremberg,[9] he clearly shared the objective of neutralizing the intelligentsia and other potential sources of resistance, as shown by his aforementioned 31 October decree granting the police sweeping powers. On 10 November, the eve of the independence day, he reacted to reports of subversive posters with the order that one man from each house where posters were found should be shot. It was thus no surprise that the Sonderaktion Krakau was a prelude to a wave of arrests across the General Government between 9 and 11 November which encompassed around 2,000 people. In Lublin, for example, all professors that the Germans could find from the city's Catholic University, together with some students, were seized; the university itself was closed on 17

November. Although the large cities were the principal targets, the effects reverberated through the provinces. On 9 November, Klukowski noted the arrest in Zamość of the county administrator, mayor and a priest along with three Jews. They were held as hostages to ensure that 11 November passed off peacefully. As this suggests, most of the people arrested in mid-November were subsequently released. However, around 300 were murdered in the following weeks. Warsaw was particularly targeted, with many executions carried out in the gardens of the Sejm. From December onwards, killings increasingly took place at a location which remains virtually unheard of in the West but is notorious in Poland: Palmiry. A prewar ammunition dump in a pine forest north-west of Warsaw was converted into an execution site at which close to 200 people were shot before the end of the year, a prelude to the horrors to come.[10]

Despite, or perhaps partly because of, these measures, the German leadership found itself increasingly concerned about the security situation in early 1940. These anxieties were magnified by the waves of tens of thousands of people Himmler was deporting from the incorporated territories from late 1939 onwards. As Frank put it on 30 May 1940, ‘an active leadership [...] full of bitterness’ was arriving from the Warthegau and West Prussia, strengthening the Polish resistance movement. Although the Governor General resisted Himmler over these deportations, his fear of their effects pushed him closer to dependence on the Reichsführer’s representatives within his realm. At a meeting of the Reich Defence Council in the GG on 2 March 1940, two days after a conference with Hitler, Frank stressed the still prevalent concept of the General

Government as a ‘homeland of the Poles’ yet emphasized his

> tremendous responsibility, that this area remains firmly under German control, that the backbone of the Poles remains broken for all time and that never again can there be even the slightest resistance from this area to German Reich policy.

It was in this context that Frank made his already cited observation that the Germans could not kill 14 million people. Nonetheless, he also justified the violence perpetrated since October 1939:

> Where it came here and there to, so to speak, generally humanely regrettable incidents, we must properly carry the responsibility. We live in war, we live also in an insanely difficult conflict with a fanatical people that has sworn our death. Therefore, one must understand that here and there this and that happens.

Whilst the Germans should treat those population groups they needed – such as workers, small traders and peasants – sensibly, they would ‘not recoil’ from taking necessary measures against a people who were ‘experts in the field of conspiracy’. It was clear who the targets would be: the ‘leading group of the nationalists is limited mainly to the intelligentsia circle’.[11]

This meeting marked the preliminary stage in the planning of what would prove to be the deadliest crime yet inflicted on the GG: the ‘extraordinary pacification campaign’ (‘*Außerordentliche Befriedungsaktion*’), or AB-Aktion for short. Frank elaborated on his motives at a

lengthy conference on 30 May 1940 which has already been referred to several times. The GG was no longer envisaged as a Polish homeland but as territory which would one day be subject to Germanization. In the meantime, it was necessary

> to finish off at an accelerated pace the mass of the seditious resistance politicians in our hands and other politically suspect individuals and at the same time to clean up the inheritance of the previous Polish criminality.

Happily, an opportunity had presented itself for such an acceleration: ‘On 10 May the offensive in the West began, i.e. on that day the prevailing interest of the world in our affairs here expired.’ The authorities no longer had to worry about ‘the atrocity propaganda and the lying reports’ which had characterized the GG’s early months. Of course, Frank did not care if ‘the Americans or the French or the Jews or perhaps even the Pope’ were unhappy. However, he was angry that there had been complaints from the Berlin bureaucracy ‘and even from the Wehrmacht, that this was a murderous regime, that we must stop these atrocities, etc.’. The French campaign meant that the administration could now be ‘completely indifferent’ to the concerns of the outside world. ‘We should’, declared the Governor General, ‘take advantage of the moment.’

Frank was clear what the AB-Aktion, which could only be carried out with the ‘old National Socialist fighters of the police and SS’, would entail:

> I confess quite openly that it will cost several thousand Poles their lives, above all from the intellectual

> leadership of Poland. But for us all as National Socialists this time brings the obligation to make sure that no more resistance emerges from the Polish people. […] Gentlemen, we are not murderers.

This was a sad necessity, ‘a terrible burden’ to have to impose on the SS and policemen obliged to carry out the murders. Consolation could be drawn from the fact that they were fulfilling an order of the Führer for the greater good of Germany. Frank returned to this point in his lengthy closing peroration:

> The trouble we had with the Kraków professors was terrible. Had we dealt with the matter here, it would have gone differently. I would therefore urgently entreat you to deport no one else to the concentration camps in the Reich but to undertake the liquidation here or to impose a proper punishment. Everything else is a burden to the Reich and a permanent aggravation.[12]

By the time this conference took place, the AB-Aktion was already under way. Frank had authorized the operation in a meeting with Bruno Streckenbach (the commander of the Security Police in the GG) on 16 May, but large-scale arrests had in fact been occurring since the end of March. Streckenbach reported on 30 May that ‘2,000 men and several hundred women’ associated with the underground were already in the hands of the Sipo when the AB-Aktion began (i.e. on 16 May) and that the police were now targeting approximately 2,000 others who had been identified by the SD. Assuming a 75 per cent success rate, he estimated that the Germans would therefore be able to

seize around 3,500 members of ‘the politically most dangerous section of the resistance movement in the General Government’.[13]

In fact, rather more people were arrested in the late spring and early summer of 1940. Amongst them was Zygmunt Klukowski who was one of 11 men taken from Szczebrzeszyn on 19 June. They were held in Zamość’s Rotunda fortress, where they were confined to cells holding 15 people and subjected to beatings by the guards. Klukowski estimated that there were approximately 200 prisoners in the Rotunda, many of whom he knew. His breakdown of the professions represented gives some idea of the groups targeted in the AB-Aktion: 18 priests, 13 lawyers and judges, 19 teachers, 6 doctors and 7 engineers. Klukowski was freed after a couple of days because the German fear of typhoid prompted a request from Szczebrzeszyn for his return to the hospital. Others were less fortunate. Three weeks after his release, the doctor learned that more than 40 of the Zamość prisoners had been executed in Lublin. Warsaw was hardest hit by the terror. The largest single massacre of the AB-Aktion took place at Palmiry when 358 men and women were shot on 20 and 21 June. The victims included Maciej Rataj, a prominent leader of the People’s Party and former marshal of the Sejm; Mieczysław Niedziałkowski, a leading socialist; Jan Pohoski, Starzyński’s deputy as mayor of Warsaw; and Janusz Kusociński, a gold medal winner in the 10,000 metres at the 1932 Olympics.[14] In total, some 3,500 political prisoners were executed in the course of the Aktion along with 3,000 criminals already in German custody.

Frank and Streckenbach had set 15 June as the closing date for the campaign but, as the preceding examples show, mass arrests and executions continued through the summer.

In fact, it could be said that the AB-Aktion – in the sense of a targeted campaign of terror against the Polish elites and the underground – never ceased. There were further mass killings of Varsovians at Palmiry on 30 August (87 people) and 17 September (200), and possibly on other occasions during the autumn. However, the Germans were increasingly employing other methods to deal with the ever growing numbers arrested. On 14 June 1940, 728 Polish and Jewish men from the city of Tarnów were dispatched on the first transport to the newly established Auschwitz concentration camp in Upper Silesia. They included people seized in the AB-Aktion together with young men who had been arrested trying to cross the Slovak border. Despite Frank's injunction not to burden the camps with prisoners, Auschwitz occupied a unique position, technically within the Reich but on the territory of the former Polish state. It became the principal site of incarceration for Poles from both the incorporated territories and the GG. Indeed, this was its primary role prior to 1942 when the recently created Birkenau satellite camp was converted into an extermination centre for Jews from across Europe.[15]

The Tarnów transport was thus the first of many. On 12 August 1940 Warsaw suffered what Ludwik Landau recorded in his diary as 'a manhunt on a scale not applied until now':

> Naturally, the action was not conducted particularly gently: trams were stopped at bayonet point, with threats to use them if anyone tried to escape; apparently, two people were killed attempting to slip away, one bayoneted, the second shot.

The operation, which lasted for more than three hours, targeted young men. Two days later, 1,153 of the arrestees,

and another 513 already in German custody, were sent to Auschwitz on the first transport from Warsaw. Another, carrying 1,705 prisoners, followed a new wave of mass arrests on 19 September 1940. Amongst those caught on this occasion was Władysław Bartoszewski, a young underground activist who would later be a noted historian of the occupation and later still the foreign minister of democratic Poland. Bartoszewski was released from Auschwitz in April 1941 but many of his fellow prisoners did not survive that long:

> just before Christmas, scores of telegrams reached families in Warsaw bearing notification from the camp authorities of the death of their next of kin. Warsaw was horror-struck: most of the persons reported dead had been young and healthy, arrested or picked up in the streets only a few months earlier.[16]

In the four and a half years after June 1940, more than 130,000 Poles were deported to Auschwitz, a large proportion of them from the General Government. More than 70,000 died, mostly as a result of the appalling conditions – starvation, disease, overwork – in the camp; thousands were simply executed.

Frank had stressed on 30 May that the AB-Aktion was a targeted campaign against the elites as a part of a conscious ‘splintering policy’, which would win ordinary Poles over to German rule through shared hostility to the ‘Polish great capitalists’. The Governor General expressed the hope that workers and peasants would come to hold the opinion that ‘we stand under the protection of the Reich and its executive organs and we need not fear when we do our work’. However, the inherent implausibility of this statement

was compounded by the indiscriminate reality of Nazi terror. Landau had noted during the August round-up that the Germans ‘even took away newsboys, delivery boys on bikes, drivers of the “cycle taxis” ’.[17] German violence was far more wide-ranging than Frank’s delusion of a surgical strike against intellectuals and discredited elites.

This was particularly the case with supposed reprisal actions in which entire communities were punished for real or perceived attacks on the Germans and their agents. Such atrocities began in the earliest weeks of the General Government’s history and were typically initiated by local officials or police commanders. Jews were particularly vulnerable, as in Ostrów Mazowiecka, the seat of the GG’s northernmost Kreis, where a fire broke out on 9 November 1939. The Germans attributed the blaze to Jewish arsonists and forced Jewish men to extinguish it before having them beaten. Two days later, the town’s entire Jewish community – 364 men, women and children – was murdered by men of Police Battalion 91. When a Polish policeman was killed and another wounded by a Jewish hoodlum only recently released from prison in Warsaw on 13 November, the Germans arrested the 53 residents of the building at Nalewki 9 where the attack took place and demanded a ransom of 300,000 złotych from the city’s Jewish community. Five members of the Jewish Council were taken hostage to ensure payment. Even though the sum was raised, the 53 were shot anyway.[18]

Whilst the murder of Jews might be seen as a form of targeted terror, ethnic Poles were also victims of similar massacres. The most notorious, in terms of impact on Polish consciousness, occurred in Wawer, a town on the edge of Warsaw, where two German NCOs were shot in a restaurant by two Polish criminals on the evening of 26 December

1939. Even though the identity of the assailants was known, a local Orpo commander, Max Daume, decided to launch a ‘pacification’ programme in which more than 100 men from Wawer and the neighbouring settlement of Anin were hauled before a hastily convened kangaroo court. Antoni Bartoszek, the landlord of the site of the attack, was hanged from the door of his restaurant even before the verdicts had been announced. Another 114 men were sentenced to death. Janina Przedlacka, whose husband and eldest son were amongst the condemned, rushed after the column being marched to the railway station:

> I heard a terrifying scream followed by ‘Long live Poland!’ [...] and then perhaps at the same time a burst of machine-gun fire and groans, such terrible groans that I can hear them to this day.

Only eight men escaped with their lives. As news of the massacre spread, the impact on public opinion was immense. Władysław Szpilman, a Jewish pianist, later recalled that ‘a wall of hatred had been erected between the Germans and Poles, and neither side could climb it thereafter’.[19]

Even greater atrocities were perpetrated in the countryside. On the evening of 14 April 1940 at least 170 Polish peasants were machine-gunned by one of Globocnik’s Selbstschutz units in the village of Józefów Duży, following the killing of five members of a local ethnic German family by robbers. Rather than hunting down the criminals (who were soon apprehended by the Polish police), Globocnik ordered a reprisal which encompassed the male inhabitants of 16 villages and hamlets. On the following morning, an SS NCO raped a mentally impaired Polish girl in a neighbouring

village; he was subsequently acquitted by an SS court which took into account the ‘extraordinary emotional stress’ of participation in the massacre.[20]

However, even Globocnik could not compete with the excesses of the police in the Radom district in the spring of 1940. This was the result of the first serious armed resistance to German rule which was offered by Henryk Dobrzański, better known by his code name of ‘Hubal’. This ‘crazy major’ was a cavalry officer and former Olympian who formed a small partisan unit which waged a guerrilla campaign from the forests of the Kielce region following Poland’s defeat. The police retaliated with the principle of collective responsibility: between October and December 1939, around 185 villagers were hanged and a further 88 were taken into custody never to return. The ‘official’ underground leadership in Warsaw called on Hubal to demobilize for fear of further retaliations but he refused. The Germans then launched a far more comprehensive ‘pacification’ campaign in which 31 villages were raided between 30 March and 11 April 1940. A total of 687 people were shot, 265 of them in the village of Skłoby on 11 April. A further 24 people were sent to concentration camps and two villagers died as a result of torture. Twelve villages and 600 farms were torched in the course of the campaign.[21] Hubal was eventually killed in a German ambush at the end of the month.

These reprisal murders were clearly some distance from Frank’s aim of targeted violence which would leave ordinary Poles with nothing to fear. Although he referenced both Hubal and the killing of the ethnic Germans in Józefów when he authorized the AB-Aktion on 16 May, he was unhappy with the use of what were effectively indiscriminate massacres, exacerbating his already strained relations with

the police. It was not that Frank objected out of humanitarian concern; rather, he was intelligent enough to realize that random terror would prove counter-productive and further saw such unauthorized actions as a threat to his authority. However, having effectively given the police carte blanche with the 31 October decree and the AB-Aktion, he proved powerless to curb Himmler's men. Despite the outcry over the Józefów killings, an unrepentant Globocnik used the Selbstschutz to carry out another massacre in the village of Radawiec, where 27 Poles and Jews were shot after the murder of an ethnic German policeman in June 1940.[22] Although the creation of the Sonderdienst and accompanying dissolution of the Selbstschutz appeared to be a victory for the Governor General, the civil administration remained dependent on the police even though the latter's atrocities were rendering the security situation more unstable.

The clearest illustration that the scope of German terror extended far beyond those who could conceivably be considered a political threat came in January 1940 when Globocnik's men raided a psychiatric hospital in the city of Chełm. A local priest related the events in a report to the Polish episcopate. After expelling the staff at gunpoint, the Germans shot all of the patients, 'including many children'.

> Their work accomplished, the assassins came out and gave the following order: 'The hospital is empty. Carry out the corpses immediately, for in two hours we shall occupy the building.'

On this occasion 441 people were murdered. This was not part of a wider campaign against people with disabilities of the sort that characterized the incorporated territories.

Rather, it has been suggested that Globocnik may have wanted the building to house ethnic Germans from the Soviet-controlled Wołyń region who were due to arrive in the Lublin district prior to settlement in the Warthegau.[23] Yet this in itself, of course, demonstrated the appalling lack of regard for dignity and human life which was evident from the earliest months of the GG's history.

Amongst the groups liable to fall victim to Nazi terror were the Catholic clergy. In the 2 March 1940 meeting, Frank had identified the church, along with the intelligentsia and former soldiers, as one of the greatest challenges to German rule, noting correctly that 'Catholicism in this land is not a confession, but a condition of life'. It was hardly surprising, therefore, that even before the AB-Aktion, priests were targeted. This was especially true in the Lublin district which contributed a quarter of the more than 800 clergy arrested in the GG's first year. A church report unsurprisingly attributed this to 'the fact that the head of the Gestapo at Lublin was the same individual who distinguished himself at Vienna'. However, even before Globocnik's arrival, Bishop Marian Fulman, his suffragan Władysław Goral and a number of other clergy in Lublin had been arrested in October 1939 and sentenced to death. On this occasion, Frank exercised his seldom-publicized prerogative of mercy so that the 75-year-old Fulman and the others were instead sent to Sachsenhausen.[24]

Although there was never a systematic anti-Catholic campaign of the sort that characterized the Warthegau, in many places public worship was rendered impossible. This was partly because of the murder or incarceration of priests: for example, in Biała Podlaska in the Lublin district, all three parish priests were arrested in January 1940. The authorities

also transferred 19 churches in the Lublin diocese to the predominantly Ukrainian Greek Catholic church and 11 in the Siedlce see to the Ukrainian Orthodox church, leaving thousands of Catholics with nowhere to worship. Even where services were permitted, they were supervised by the authorities; a January 1941 circular to the bishops proscribed hymns with patriotic associations, or even others with the same tunes. Needless to say, as the fate of the Stoss altarpiece in Kraków demonstrated, numerous works of art and relics were stolen from churches.[25]

Whilst these latter depredations were clearly linked to the Nazi predilection for plunder, the attacks on the church reflected a wider assault on symbols of Polish culture. Another symptom was the destruction of national monuments, typified by the fate of Warsaw castle. Kraków was worst affected by what the government-in-exile described as ‘the war waged on statues’. The first target, in late 1939, was the large monument to the Battle of Grunwald located just north of the Old Town. This commemorated one of the great turning points of medieval eastern European history when the Poles and Lithuanians had defeated the Teutonic knights in 1410. Karolina Lanckorońska admitted that Poles found the destruction of this monument ‘at least understandable’. However, the same could not be said for the removal of the statue of Poland’s national poet, Adam Mickiewicz, from the Rynek Główny in the summer of 1940. ‘Women were weeping loudly,’ wrote Lanckorońska, whilst ‘the police chased people away, beating and arresting numerous photographers.’ Such cultural desecration – like terror – was not entirely successful in sapping the population’s will to resist. Indeed, Lanckorońska saw it as a crucial turning

point: for ‘the first time, simple people who had initially been impressed by the Germans were stirred to fury’.[26]

The central battleground in the war against Polish culture was education. On 31 October 1939, Frank had told Goebbels that the ‘Poles should have made available to them only such educational possibilities that demonstrate to them their ethnic fate’. On the same day, he issued a decree which allowed elementary and vocational schools to reopen but which placed secondary schools under ‘special regulations’. The implementation of this order was initially haphazard, depending on the whim of the local German authorities, but by the spring of 1940 it was clear that ‘special regulations’ entailed the abolition of legal secondary education. As the Sonderaktion Krakau demonstrated, universities for Poles were out of the question. The closure of the institutions in Kraków and Lublin was therefore soon repeated in Warsaw whilst the ongoing arrests of intellectuals particularly targeted faculty members.[27]

Frank did, however, have ambitions for higher learning in the GG which resulted in the creation of the Institut für deutsche Ostarbeit (IdO) in the former buildings of Jagiellonian University. The institute opened on 20 April 1940 (Hitler’s birthday) with a speech from Frank in which the Governor General extolled it as a ‘most important weapon’ in the struggle against Germany’s enemies. Musing on the centuries of German Kraków, whose influence had apparently radiated across Poland, he lost himself in a reverie of reviving this submerged culture which ‘we will bring back to the light of the sun, fill with new life and, with the impulse of this time, increase to new fruit’. Frank ultimately harboured the hope that the IdO would one day form the nucleus of a German ‘Copernicus University’ in

Kraków. However, the realization of this aspiration was hampered not merely by the war and Hitler's indifference, but also by a struggle to recruit staff of sufficient calibre to meet even the academic standards of Nazi Germany. Instead, the IdO effectively became a branch of the civil administration, in which capacity it served as part think tank, part cheerleader. The humanities departments (history, prehistory and art history) preached the same mendacious vision of Poland's past and projected future as the Baedeker (to which IdO staffers contributed) whilst even apparently innocuous subjects were politicized. The horticulture section, for example, advised the administration on the necessity of settling German farmers and planting forests to make them feel more at home.[28]

The IdO's most obviously ideological department was that of racial and ethnic research. Anthropologists and ethnologists trawled the GG in search of German blood, particularly amongst the Górale people (literally 'highlanders') of the Tatra mountains, who became something of an obsession amongst Nazi racial theorists. Jewish 'specialists', meanwhile, liaised closely with anthropologists from Vienna University to carry out fieldwork in the GG. These studies – complete with body measurements and photography – relied on close cooperation with the SD, which also provided muscle when the specimens became too restless. However, by late 1941 the IdO team realized that they were in a race against time, leading Dr Dora Maria Kahlich of Vienna to suggest that her researchers urgently take measurements of a sample of 100 Jewish families in Tarnów 'so that we can at least save some material if any particular measures should be taken'. Less than a year later, Dr Elfriede Fliethmann was informing Kahlich that, though 8,000 Jews remained in Tarnów, 'almost

none' of the Jews of Galicia, Fliethmann's specialism, were left: 'our material already has a rarity value.'[29]

Such scholarship was made possible through the appropriation of Jagiellonian University's assets. Naturally, the IdO was not alone in this practice. It has been estimated that only ten of the university's 137 institutions survived the war completely intact and that 50 million złotych worth of equipment went missing, much of it evidently diverted to universities in the Reich. This was repeated wherever applicable across the General Government. In some cases, the Germans were purely destructive as, inevitably, in Lublin where most of the contents of 'the largest Talmudic library in Europe' mentioned by Baedeker were burned in early 1940. In general, however, the collections of libraries, archives and museums – like those of universities – were simply stolen.[30]

German terror and assaults on Polish culture reflected Hitler's injunctions to make the GG secure and to neutralize the intelligentsia. However, as the above examples suggest, they were also often linked to another of the Führer's exhortations: economic exploitation. In this context, German policy in the first weeks of the General Government's existence was one of outright robbery. On 13 October, a day after Hitler created the GG, Göring held a meeting of the Reich Defence Council which resulted in a directive issued on 19 October. Whereas reconstruction was to proceed in the incorporated Polish territories, 'all raw materials, scrap, machinery, etc., which are useful for the German war economy' in the General Government were to be removed to the Reich. Similarly, enterprises which were not 'absolutely necessary for the bare existence of the inhabitants' were to be transferred to Germany unless their

relocation would take ‘a disproportionately long time’, in which case they were to remain in Poland under German control.[31]

This directive differed from guidelines that the army command had set out on 3 October, which provided for the confiscation of raw materials and goods by the Reich but also for the preservation inside the GG of economically valuable industries. Göring had initially taken a similar position at the Reich Defence Council meeting on 13 October but the published directive was clearly harsher, probably a result of Hitler’s comments on 17 October. Frank went even further than Göring, emphatically rejecting the Wehrmacht’s line at a meeting with representatives of the Armaments Inspectorate on 3 October in Poznań. The aim should be ‘ruthless exploitation’, with all useful raw materials, machines and manufacturing facilities sent to Germany: ‘Poland should be treated as a colony, the Poles will be the slaves of the great German world empire.’ For political reasons, the Polish armaments industry could not be rebuilt. Instead, even after the war, Poland would be reduced to ‘its essential position as an agrarian country that would be dependent on the import of industrial products from Germany’. In January 1940, after policy had changed, he explained that Hitler had instructed him on his initial appointment to reduce his territory ‘in its economic, social, cultural, political structure to, so to speak, a heap of rubble’.[32] Frank thus initially sided with the Führer against the Wehrmacht and even, to some extent, Göring, who had believed that at least some economic resources could remain in situ.

In practice, however, such differences proved relatively meaningless since all agencies sought to plunder the Polish economy in late 1939. The greater conflicts were, as in the

field of cultural treasures, over the share of the loot. During the military administration period, Göring had dispatched his emissaries to seize raw materials and useful businesses, leading to complaints from Frank's officials once the GG was established. Naturally, the Governor General also perceived a challenge to his own authority and retaliated with measures to curb Göring's agents. These disputes were eventually resolved but not before the economy of the General Government had been denuded. On 2 March 1940, Frank described the GG as 'economically speaking, an empty body. What there was in raw materials, has, as far as possible, been taken out by the Four Year Plan.'[33]

The dispute over control of the GG's assets was eventually settled as part of the wider agreement which resulted in Frank's appointment as Göring's representative for the Four Year Plan and the Reich Defence Council. This deal coincided with a change of course since both men had come to realize that unlimited plunder and disorganization were endangering the other objectives which Hitler had set for the General Government. Of particular concern was the food situation since the GG lacked sufficient supplies to support a population that was expected to swell by several million through Himmler's demographic plans. In addition, there was growing pressure from Frank's economics department, the governors and the Armaments Inspectorate to reopen the factories in order to exploit the GG's industry for German benefit and to support the population. Thus when Frank and Seyss-Inquart met Göring on 4 December 1939, they agreed that Hitler's strategy should be replaced by a more constructive economic policy. As Frank explained to his officials on 19 January 1940, 'the absolute destruction principle' had been superseded by an attempt to foster the economy 'as it is able to bring advantages to the Reich in

the present situation'. The Governor General therefore issued a directive on 25 January which set out the new course. The aim was the short-term utilization of the GG for the benefit of the German war economy. In this context, agricultural production should intensify whilst industry was to be exploited and 'if necessary' expanded. Transports of raw materials to the Reich were to be limited to those which were not 'absolutely required' to maintain production in the GG.[34]

However, the extent of this change should not be overstated. On 2 March 1940, when Frank referred to the earlier depredations, he argued that this 'was also good' since 'the Reich has an immense need for these raw materials. [...] There can be no economic flourishing of the General Government when there is a war economy in the Reich.' As these comments, like the 25 January directive, demonstrated, both Frank and Göring remained committed to the continued exploitation of the GG for German benefit. The essential difference with Hitler was that this exploitation should take place in situ rather than through simple robbery. That this entailed only a partial change for the inhabitants of the GG can be seen with the issue which had caused the initial dispute between Frank and Göring, the question of trusteeship. Put simply, this meant the right of the Germans to seize and administer indigenous property and businesses. Göring had initially attempted to establish a branch of the Main Trustee Office East (HTO) in Kraków to grab assets on his behalf, as was the case in the incorporated territories. The Governor General had prevailed, however, so that an independent Trustee Office for the GG was established under his control. By this stage, Frank had already effectively confiscated the property of the Polish state with a decree of 15 November 1939.[35]

Of greater impact was a series of decrees on 24 January 1940 which allowed for the seizure of private property on the grounds that it was either ownerless or that it was in the public interest to do so; both of these concepts were naturally loosely defined. Authorization from Frank or the governors was required although there were special arrangements for the SS and Wehrmacht. The consequence was that thousands of businesses were taken over and placed in the hands of trustees who included German companies such as HASAG and private individuals like Oskar Schindler. As early as the spring of 1940, there were complaints from within the administration regarding their abilities and honesty. Hermann Denkowsky, head of the monopolies office, lamented that it was not unusual for a brandy merchant to pay himself up to 3,000 złotych per month whilst many trustees also employed their wives at high salaries.[36]

However, although Reich Germans tended to administer the largest businesses, many trustees were Polish or local ethnic Germans. This reflected, in part, the fact that the principal targets of confiscation were Jewish-owned businesses. Decrees providing for the 'Aryanization' of Jewish property had been issued during the first fortnight of the September campaign, and they were followed by a barrage of regulations during the GG's first year. Long before widespread ghettoization, the aim was to drive Jews out of the economy as quickly possible. Although many businesses survived until 1942, more than 100,000 were confiscated, especially in the retail sector. In Szczebrzeszyn, Klukowski recorded in August 1940 that all Jewish stores – even 'small soda places' – were closed and put up for auction. In a report of October 1940, Heinz Ehaus, the Kreishauptmann of Rzeszów, boasted that he had

demonstrated that it was possible even ‘in such a Jewified city as Reichshof, to implement Aryanization without paralyzing social and economic life’. The process was so far advanced that the ‘main streets of my Kreis capital will be fully free of Jews in a short time’. He had now begun to transfer businesses to Aryan hands in the smaller towns.[37]

There were planners in the administration and the IdO who argued for destruction of Jewish enterprises as a precondition for the emergence of a Polish middle class which would promote economic development in the General Government. However, it is clear that racism was the principal motive for most officials involved in the process, many of whom resisted transferring businesses to Poles. Ehaus claimed that he had used Poles, mainly deportees from the incorporated territories, as trustees because he could not wait for Reich Germans who anyway would refuse to take over the properties in the condition in which they were left by the Jews. As Ehaus’s subsequent career would demonstrate, personal enrichment through the persecution of Jews was also an influence. Even the best-known proponent of the creation of a Polish middle class, Walter Emmerich – head of the GG’s economics department from June 1940 – used the liquidation of Jewish retailers to create opportunities for the traders of Hamburg and other German ports to monopolize the wholesale market and flood the GG with unsold hair grips and rubber shoes. Emmerich was a leading figure in the Hamburg business community.[38]

Economic policy was most nakedly exploitative with the issue of labour. On the very first day of the GG’s existence, Frank had issued decrees imposing forced labour on both Poles and Jews though with the subtle distinction that Poles had a ‘labour duty’ and Jews a ‘labour obligation’.[39] The military administration had already introduced compulsory

labour in agriculture but Frank's decree for Poles extended this to public works projects.[40] However, the principal objective regarding Poles was to provide workers for the Reich, especially agriculture, in line with Hitler's expectations. The only concrete plans the Germans had initially developed were for the use of POWs, 300,000 of whom were in Germany by the end of 1939. By mid-November there was growing pressure from Göring and from the Reich Food Ministry, notably its malevolent State Secretary Herbert Backe, for deliveries of civilians. Frank hoped that propaganda and prewar traditions of seasonal migration of agricultural workers to Germany would be sufficient to generate voluntary recruitment, especially from the unemployed. As an extra incentive, benefits were limited or, for many, effectively abolished.

However, by the end of 1939 fewer than 40,000 civilians from the GG had taken up the offer. Yet Frank's new economic strategy, in the form of the 25 January 1940 directive, called for the delivery of at least 1 million workers to the Reich by April. Even at this stage, many officials continued to believe that compulsion was not needed. At a meeting in Radom in late February, Lasch claimed that, despite some problems in the cities, villagers were walking up to 70 kilometres to board the trains to Germany. In the middle of the same month, Klukowski noted, to his own surprise, that 'the recruiting is going rather well'. However, two weeks later he was relieved to report that volunteers were no longer registering. By 19 March, barely anyone was heeding the German calls: only 2 people, one of them 'extremely ill', reported out of the 130 expected.[41]

This pattern was repeated across the General Government. Max Frauendorfer, the head of the labour department, admitted that in one case only 69 people from

a planned transport of 800 had appeared, reflecting an emerging national ‘anxiety psychosis’. The Germans generally attributed this reluctance to underground propaganda and threats. Alternatively, on 21 April, by which time only 210,000 workers had been registered, Frank was blaming ‘malice or the intention to indirectly harm Germany, by not placing themselves at its disposal’.[42] Whilst it is certainly true that Poles generally had the temerity to be less than supportive of the German war effort, a simpler explanation for the fall in recruitment could be found in the atrocious conditions Polish workers faced in the Reich.

The Germans thus began to move towards open coercion. Following a meeting with Backe in late April 1940, Frank introduced compulsory labour for those born in the 1915 to 1924 cohort. Each district was typically given a quota to fill by a specified date; the district and Kreis authorities in turn set quotas for each community, leaving the, usually Polish, local officials to decide who should be conscripted. Should the quota not be met, the police would impose punitive measures. Klukowski noted on 1 June that increasing numbers of young people were being summoned to report for labour in the Reich. When they unsurprisingly hid, the Germans began ‘taking parents’ as hostages.[43] Yet harsher methods had limited success, adding only around 60,000 workers in two months to take the total recruited in the first half of 1940 to 272,238, just over a quarter of the figure originally intended to have been achieved by the end of April. As it turned out, the fall of France reduced the Reich’s dependence on Polish labour so that the number of workers conscripted in the second half of 1940 could fall to 29,724 without undue concern. However, the issue of labour conscription was one which would later return with a vengeance.[44]

In the meantime, Jews were the principal victims of labour policy.[45] Even during the September campaign, large numbers of people had been seized by the Wehrmacht and others. The situation got so bad in Warsaw that the newly formed Jewish Council negotiated an agreement with the Sipo in October 1939 to supply and pay for workers in an attempt to stop the random seizures.[46] Frank's forced labour decree was thus giving official sanction to what was already occurring whilst seeking to bring some semblance of order to the process. Implementation was placed in the hands of Krüger, who set out his plans in December. Jews were to be registered by profession and deployed in labour columns funded by the Jewish Councils. The consequence was the drafting of tens of thousands of people for often deliberately demeaning work. In February 1940, Emanuel Ringelblum noted that 'women were seized for labour and, it just so happened, women in fur coats. They're ordered to wash the pavement with their panties, then put them on again wet.'[47]

However, doubts were soon voiced within the administration regarding this system. As so often, competing jurisdictions played a significant role. At the 30 May meeting, which also discussed the AB-Aktion, the governors quarrelled with Streckenbach, arguing that the police lacked the personnel to properly enforce labour recruitment. This also reflected concerns that Jewish labour was not being allocated effectively, especially given the need to replace Polish workers sent to the Reich. Deployment should therefore be placed in the hands of the civil administration's labour offices. Streckenbach rejected these arguments but did admit that the current system was failing in another respect:

> If the Jewish communities would continue to be exploited as hitherto, then one day millions of Jews will become a burden on the General Government. In the end, one could not let them starve.

Fear of the financial cost of supporting impoverished Jews rather than compassion was the key factor here. As Streckenbach explained, 'in the General Government there are no rich Jews left, but in the main only a Jewish proletariat'. As a result of these varied concerns, a new compromise policy worked out by Frauendorfer of the labour department was introduced in early June. Labour offices would now allocate Jewish workers, who were to be mainly used in the free economy as replacements for Poles. In an important change of course, these skilled labourers would be paid, albeit at 80 per cent of the rate for Poles. Only the remnant who could not be employed in the regular economy were to be directed to forced labour. The role of the police would now be that of enforcement; that is, seizing the Jews and guarding them.[48]

However, this policy was resisted by many local officials and employers who resented having to pay Jews. This mood was typified by a report from Częstochowa: 'I assume that even this regulation can be lost locally and have acted accordingly.'[49] An even greater challenge to the new system came from Globocnik, who continued to seek to monopolize Jewish labour in the Lublin district.[50] Not for the last time, this reflected both his own empire-building and his pursuit of Himmler's pet projects, in this case an 'Ostwall' on the border with the Soviet Union. In early 1940, both Himmler and Heydrich had pushed the idea that hundreds of thousands, possibly millions, of Jews could be put to work building defensive fortifications. By springtime this plan had

been reduced to one for a series of anti-tank ditches in the south-east of the Lublin district to be dug by Jews housed in a group of camps clustered around the village of Bełżec; the first inmates were seized in late May 1940.[51] Ignoring the June agreement on labour, Globocnik then increased the scale of round-ups in Lublin and neighbouring communities in July and August, provoking protests from the district's labour department. The latter objected both to the unauthorized nature of the process and to the fact that it was being deprived of Jewish manpower which had already been earmarked for other forced labour projects. Despite a series of apparent compromise agreements in the following weeks, Globocnik continued to abduct Jews at random. The labour department retaliated by taking Jews who had been deported from the Warsaw and Radom districts at Globocnik's request. Instead of sending them to Bełżec, the labour officials generally allocated them to civilian-controlled forced labour camps, chiefly for road construction and water regulation projects. At least 21,000 people – more than a third of whom were from the Radom district – thus found themselves trapped in forced labour camps in the Lublin district in the second half of 1940.[52]

Conditions in all of these forced labour camps were atrocious but were at their worse in the Bełżec network. The commandant Hermann Dolp was drawn from Himmler's collection of criminal sadists, having been demoted to Lublin from the incorporated territories and banned from drinking alcohol for two years after he had pulled a gun on a Nazi official whose Polish girlfriend he had drunkenly attempted to rape in February 1940. Globocnik had given Dolp the command of a camp on Lublin's Lipowa Street which had been created in late 1939 as possibly the first forced labour camp in the General Government. Samuel Gruber, a Jewish

POW housed in Lipowa, recalled that any prisoner 'still asleep when Dolf [*sic*] entered the barracks was shot at once, so was anyone too sick or weak to get up'.[53]

Such practices were transferred to Bełżec. A medical inspection in September 1940 found the camps 'fatal'. The overcrowded barracks were

> dark and dirty. The louse infestation is very great. Around 30% of the workers have no shoes, trousers and shirts. All sleep on the floor, without straw. The roofs are everywhere damaged, the windows without panes, it is terribly cramped. [...] On top of this, there is still no soap, and it is difficult even to get water. The sick lie and sleep together with the healthy. In the night, one may not leave the barracks, so all natural needs must be performed on the spot.

Krüger eventually dissolved the Ostwall project, and with it the Bełżec camps, in the autumn of 1940. Even then, however, Globocnik proved uncooperative, sending to the water camps exhausted Jews incapable of any further work. Similarly, no attention was paid to original place of residence when people were released. For example, a transport ostensibly returning 900 inhabitants to Radom in October mainly contained Jews from Lublin.[54]

Several hundred Jews lost their lives as a result of their incarceration in the Bełżec labour camps and hundreds more were left disabled for life. The end result of their drudgery was the creation of less than ten miles' worth of trenches which had already been rendered pointless by Hitler's decision to invade the USSR (and would prove utterly ineffective against the Soviets in 1944). This perceived inefficiency was a major reason for the civil

administration’s disagreements with Globocnik. By contrast, the officials had shown no objection in principle to the appalling conditions and SS brutality, which also characterized the road and water camps.[55]

Forced labour and confiscation of property were just two facets of the barrage of discriminatory laws and practices inflicted on the Jews of the General Government, a manifestation of Hitler’s ‘hard ethnic struggle’. As the Przemyśl massacres suggested, appalling levels of violence were employed from the beginning of the occupation. In Piotrków Trybunalski, for example, more than a fortnight of terror, arson and theft culminated on Yom Kippur (23 September 1939) in a raid on the city’s Jewish quarter in which inhabitants were subjected to repeated beatings and excruciating acts of humiliation. A young rabbi, Shimon Huberband, described how beards ‘weren’t sheared off, or cut with a knife or bayonet, they were literally ripped out’. Exhausted and battered victims, already weakened by the holiday fast, were then taken at midnight to a railway depot for forced labour and only released more than 12 hours later. Attacks on people were accompanied by destruction of property. The same Yom Kippur was marked by the burning of synagogues in several cities. In Grójec, to the south of Warsaw, local Jews were forced to set fire to their own synagogue and then executed for arson.[56]

Marceli Reich, who had been amongst more than 10,000 German Jews with Polish citizenship expelled to Poland in 1938, sought to explain the motives behind the violence. One reason was that many of the invaders were encountering orthodox eastern European Jews for ‘the first time in their lives’. Whereas assimilated German Jews were impossible to distinguish from ‘Aryans’, the troops could

perceive the Ostjuden as ‘those terrible Asiatic hordes’ about which Nazi propaganda had warned them. They could additionally see them as a source of easy pickings, with the maltreatment of defenceless people becoming a means to acquire ‘rings and pocket-books, a little cash, and occasionally gold pocket watches’. An unrestrained climate thus prevailed in which master-race fantasies could be played out:

> Any German who wore a uniform and had a weapon could do whatever he wished with a Jew in Warsaw. He could compel him to sing or to dance or to shit in his trousers, or to go down on his knees and beg for his life.[57]

The establishment of the GG was marked by incessant legal harassment. The Jewish forced labour decree of Frank’s first day in office was accompanied by another banning kosher slaughter. ‘Cruelties to animals of any kinds are impossible in any territory standing under German sovereignty’, explained the decree, adding that ‘perpetrators’ would be sent to prison or concentration camps.[58] Two of the myriad early anti-Jewish laws particularly stood out. On 28 November Frank obliged communities to establish Jewish Councils (Judenräte). As so often, this reflected a process which was already under way in many places. On 21 September Heydrich had instructed Einsatzgruppen commanders to create ‘Councils of Elders’ across Poland. Some had been established even before this date in a number of locations such as Kraków and Częstochowa. However, Frank’s November decree should not be seen as a continuation of Heydrich’s order but rather as a challenge to it: that is, the civil administration sought

to seize mastery over Jewish policy from the SS and police.[59]

To some extent, the Judenräte were initially welcomed by Jewish communities. They could be seen as a continuation of the prewar community councils (*Kehillot*) whilst many early members were also drawn from the citizens' committees which had been established in several cities during the September campaign. It thus appeared that the Judenräte might offer a voice in dealing with the occupiers. However, Frank's decree made it clear that the central role of the Jewish Councils would be the transmission and implementation of German orders. Furthermore, as the aforementioned Nalewki case in Warsaw in November demonstrated, the existence of central Jewish authorities made it easier to extort money from communities. In January 1940, for example, the Warsaw Judenrat was again forced to pay a ransom, this time 100,000 złotych in less than 24 hours, after an ethnic German was beaten up.[60]

The other notable decree came on 23 November 1939 with the order that all Jews aged ten and over should wear a distinctive badge, in the form of a white armband marked with a Star of David, accompanied by a separate decree requiring Jewish-owned shops to be similarly identified. Again, such orders had already been instituted in a number of cities by local administrators. The mixed reactions that the decree engendered were recorded by Halina Nelken, an assimilated teenager in Kraków. Her friend Anka 'said she is ashamed, that she is never going to wear this armband'. By contrast, Halina's father argued:

> there's no point turning our noses up at the fact that we are the Chosen People, it is not up to us where and when we are born. The Germans are the ones who

> should be ashamed of the armband, and not us. He's going to wear the Star of David with pride.

Some were even able to find humour in the situation. Emanuel Ringelblum recorded a popular Warsaw joke in February 1940: 'Nalewki Street looks like Hollywood nowadays – wherever you go you see a star!' Nonetheless, as Halina Nelken noted, 'David was the greatest king of the Jews, and the Star of Zion was once a sign of triumph – today it is a sign of contempt'.[61] She was right, of course, for the purpose of the decree was to humiliate Jews as well as to facilitate their control in what was still a pre-ghetto era.

The Jewish badge also illustrated the extent to which Nazi policy in the General Government immediately far exceeded the measures to which the Jews of the Reich had been subjected since 1933 – it would not be introduced in Germany until the autumn of 1941. The lack of restraint which characterized the GG was well expressed by Frank in a speech in Radom in November 1939:

> Make short work of the Jews. A pleasure, finally for once to be able to tackle the Jewish race physically. The more that die, so much the better; to hit him [*sic*] is a victory for our Reich. The Jews should feel that we have arrived. We want to have ½ to ¾ of the Jews east of the Vistula. We will suppress these Jews everywhere where we can. [...] The Jews from the Reich, Vienna, from everywhere; we cannot make use of Jews in the Reich.[62]

However, Frank's reference to pushing Jews 'east of the Vistula' was an admission that he did not fully control Jewish

policy. Whilst the civil administration had asserted itself with regard to labour, assets and community regulation, it had lost the battle for mastery over wider settlement policy even before the GG had been created. Initially, as the actions of Einsatzgruppe z.b.V. around Przemyśl had shown, the SS had sought to drive as many Jews as possible into the Soviet zone, murdering hundreds in the process. Such actions continued after the General Government's creation in communities close to the border, notably in the Lublin district.[63] However, even without the inevitable complaints from the Soviet authorities, Himmler was aware that this was hardly a viable solution for the millions of Jews now under Nazi control. By mid-September, plans had therefore been developed to turn a portion of Poland into a 'reservation', a dumping ground for the Reich's Jews, including those of the Polish territories earmarked for incorporation. Heydrich's 21 September instructions to the Einsatzgruppen commanders had envisaged the area east of Kraków for this purpose, but the revised border agreement with the USSR led to a shift of focus to the area between the Vistula and Bug rivers, essentially the future Lublin district. On 29 September, Hitler told Rosenberg of his intention to send to this area 'the whole Jewry (also from the Reich), as well as all in any way unreliable elements'. An 'invincible' wall on the Vistula would prevent them from ever returning.[64]

The first attempt to deport Reich Jews to the East was Adolf Eichmann's ill-conceived Nisko Plan of October 1939, in which around 5,000 people from Vienna, Katowice and the Czech city of Ostrava were dispatched to Nisko, a town on the west bank of the San river in the future Kraków district. Eichmann's intention was that they would construct a transit camp in Zarzecze on the other side of the river (in

the future Lublin district) which would one day filter all of the Reich's Jews. A better understanding of what the plan really entailed was the fact that most of the deportees were simply driven across the San and left to fend for themselves. However, the deportations were abandoned within days on Himmler's instructions since circumstances had changed. This does not mean that the Lublin reservation concept no longer figured in the Reichsführer's planning. It remained a central SS obsession until the spring of 1940 and indeed found support within Frank's administration. Touring the GG in late November 1939, Seyss-Inquart observed that the region's 'intense marshy character could, in the consideration of District Governor Schmidt, serve as a Jewish reservation, a measure which could possibly cause a severe decimation of the Jews'.[65]

However, although close to 35,000 Jews were deported to the Lublin district from outside the GG between 1939 and 1941,[66] these were nothing like the numbers originally envisaged by Eichmann, Seyss-Inquart or, for that matter, Frank. The reason was that Jewish deportation plans had been overtaken by other priorities. The German-Soviet Friendship Treaty of 28 September, which had placed the Lublin region in Nazi hands, had also provided for the repatriation of ethnic Germans living in the Soviet sphere of influence, which now included the Baltic states. Baltic Germans began to arrive in Danzig in mid-October 1939, the first members of an often sorrowful procession of uprooted people, many with tenuous links to Germany, from across eastern Europe in 1939–40.[67] Himmler, as RKFDV, decided that they should be settled in the incorporated territories. The most immediate effect of this decision was that transports of Jews from the Reich proper to the GG were precluded since Himmler's more urgent task was to expel

inhabitants of the Warthegau and West Prussia to make room for the new arrivals. The Reichsführer initially expected that most of the expellees would be Jews, especially since the inclusion of the Łódź region in the Warthegau had dramatically increased the number of Polish Jews in the incorporated territories. On 30 October 1939 he set out plans for the expulsion of all 550,000 Jews from the incorporated territories together with an unspecified number of Poles by the end of February 1940; that is, in four months. At a meeting in Kraków just over a week later, Krüger made it clear to Frank that these deportations would encompass 1 million people.[68]

However, a recurring characteristic of the next 18 months was to be the gulf between the grandiose population movements devised by Himmler and Heydrich and the reality of their implementation. The sheer impracticality of moving such immense numbers of people in such short periods led each time to an inevitable scaling back in the form of various 'short-range' and 'interim' plans in advance of the constantly postponed movements of millions. This also meant that those expelled to the General Government were chiefly the inhabitants of the incorporated territories whose properties would be most useful to the ethnic German settlers, many of whom were farmers. The majority of the deportees, therefore, were not Jews, but Poles. Even so, the scale and nature of the expulsions were shocking. In the 'first short-range plan', 87,833 people were deported from the Warthegau between 1 and 17 December 1939, thereby actually exceeding Heydrich's target of 80,000. This coincided with ongoing 'wild' (i.e. unauthorized) expulsions from West Prussia in which another 87,000 were forced into the GG between September and January.[69] The misery which accompanied such transports, in the middle of one of

the coldest winters on record, can be gauged from a report on the arrival of a train in the Kraków district from Bydgoszcz in early December:

> It was composed entirely of cattle-trucks, sealed, without windows, without water, lavatories, or any heat. The journey had lasted three days and three nights. The people confined in it were mainly women and children. When the trucks were opened, there got down from them spectres who could scarcely stand upright.

Bundles which the author initially mistook for bags turned out to be 'frozen children [...]. Two half-dead children had great lumps of ice on their cheeks: it was their tears frozen on their pale faces.'[70]

Conditions on arrival were hardly much better. The civilian authorities in the GG were utterly ill-prepared to cope with such numbers at such short notice and trains were often shunted great distances from town to town before they found anywhere willing to receive them. A lack of sufficient accommodation led to deportees being housed wherever was available. For example, 400 members of one transport were put up in schools in Tarnów, where they were cared for by Catholic charities. The remainder were dispersed in the surrounding villages, living 'two days at a time with poor folk and a week at a time with the more well-to-do farmers'.[71]

Finding housing was only the beginning of the struggle since deportees had been stripped of almost everything before departure. On 11 December, Klukowski treated two people from the first transport to Szczebrzeszyn who informed him that they had been given 20 minutes to pack

and had only been allowed to bring 200 złotych. A Polish underground report from the Radom district of May 1940, by which time more than 40,000 additional people had been dumped in the GG, set out the plight of the deportees:

> twenty persons are put in one room, sleeping on foul straw which has not been changed for three months. [...] many are seriously ill; dysentery and typhus are spreading. The lack of clothing – for they were deported just as they stood – the lack of bedding and linen leads to many of them freezing to death.

German labour offices refused to provide employment, leading the report to conclude, 'what is left to them? Apparently nothing but starvation.'[72]

Himmler brushed aside humanitarian concerns in a speech to the Gauleiter on 29 February 1940:

> It is obviously possible that, on the trains in the East, but not only with evacuations, a train freezes and the people freeze to death. That is possible, that unfortunately also happens to Germans. You just simply cannot do anything about it [...]. That is just the climate there. It is regrettable for the Germans, it is also regrettable for the Poles, as far as I'm concerned, even regrettable for the Jews, if anyone wants to feel sorry for them.

However, it proved more difficult to so easily dismiss the practical objections raised by Frank's administration, particularly with regard to food and transport. At a meeting on 19 January, even Krüger had criticized his superiors for failing to think through their policies' implications. By the

time he delivered the above speech, Himmler had already been forced to accept a deal brokered by Göring on 12 February, whereby any further deportations required Frank's consent. When it became clear that Himmler's interpretation of this arrangement was rather different to that of the Governor General, Göring – who was increasingly worried about the effects of the deportations on the economies of both the GG and the incorporated territories – intervened more decisively with an order on 23 March 1940 expressly banning deportations unless they had his consent as well as proof of approval from Frank.[73]

The Governor General thus appeared to have scored a significant victory over Himmler. In fact, however, he had still committed himself to accepting more than 100,000 additional Poles in an action which had been planned since late January. And, despite Frank's misgivings, the GG was still earmarked as the ultimate reception territory for the Jews of the Warthegau, and eventually those of the Reich proper. Though continually postponed, this operation was now scheduled to commence later in 1940. Frank could hardly resist since, whilst he had Göring on his side, Himmler had Hitler on his in pursuit of his demographic ambitions. By the summer, therefore, the Governor General was increasingly concerned at the prospects of the arrival of hundreds of thousands of Jews and of the chance that Himmler might then push for further deportations.[74]

Frank was thus ecstatic when the chimera of the Madagascar Plan emerged in the summer of 1940. Indeed, in a memorandum apparently written by Frank for the Academy of German Law in January 1940, he had referred to the possibility of creating room for Polish deportees in the GG through the 'resettlement of several million Jews (e.g. to Madagascar)'. The decision by the Berlin authorities in July

1940 to seek to do exactly that was greeted in Kraków as ‘a colossal relief’, which led to the abandonment of the concept of the General Government as a Jewish reservation. However, the Madagascar Plan proved ephemeral and Frank faced renewed pressure in the autumn of 1940 from Himmler and others to allow further deportations. At a meeting on 2 October, he resisted calls from Baldur von Schirach and Erich Koch, respectively the Gauleiters of Vienna and of East Prussia, to take their Jews (and Poles in Koch’s case), only to be subjected to a lengthy tongue-lashing by Hitler. The Führer’s ideas seemed unchanged from a year earlier: living standards were to be kept low and the intelligentsia killed – ‘this sounds harsh but it is just the law of life’. The GG was to remain ‘a Polish reservation, a great Polish work camp’. Frank had increasingly conceived of its future in rather different terms over the course of 1940, but it was clear that Hitler was not persuaded. As Goebbels put it a month later:

> All of them want to unload their rubbish into the General Government. Jews, the sick, slackers, etc. And Frank is resisting. Not entirely wrongly. He wants to create a model country out of Poland. That is going too far. He cannot and should not.[75]

Although never reaching the millions envisaged by Himmler, the deportations therefore continued until March 1941, by which time more than 400,000 people had been expelled into the territory of the GG since September 1939. It was ultimately the Wehrmacht, not Frank, which was instrumental in ending the deportations due to the preparations for the invasion of the Soviet Union. However, the army simultaneously caused population displacements

of its own in early 1941, contributing to the acceleration of ghettoization.

It has become commonplace to regard ghettos as an immediate and inevitable consequence of the German occupation of Poland but this was far from true. Much of the confusion stems from Heydrich's *Schnellbrief* ('express order') to the Einsatzgruppen commanders of 21 September 1939 which called for the concentration of Jews in cities as a prelude to their future deportation to the planned reservation. The document was in fact primarily concerned with the creation of Jewish Councils, so much so that the word 'ghetto' was used only in passing:

> The concentration of the Jews in the cities will probably necessitate orders, for general reasons of security, that the Jews will be forbidden from certain quarters of the city, that they – though always considering the economic necessities – for example, are not allowed to leave the ghetto, to go out after a certain hour in the evening, etc.[76]

An apparently clearer reference was made in the minutes of a meeting which Heydrich held with his divisional chiefs on the same day: 'Jewry is to be assembled in the cities in the ghetto, to allow better possibility of control and later deportation.'[77] However, it has been convincingly argued that this phrase has been commonly misinterpreted since the term 'ghetto' could mean different things to different people at different times. Though hindsight has conditioned us to associate it with the ghettos which the Nazis eventually created, many – Germans, Jews and Poles – used it simply to refer to a traditional, stereotypically poor, Jewish quarter of a town. Take, for example, an article from the

Krakauer Zeitung (the newspaper established by Frank for the GG's German population) in November 1939:

> the Kraków ghetto is one of the many of former Poland, where Jews are crowded by the tens of thousands in filth, in unsanitary conditions, in tatters, where the most dangerous germs are bred.[78]

Indeed, even some survivors' accounts referred to 'ghettos' in places where they are known never to have existed. This ambiguity was so great that it is impossible to judge with certainty just how many ghettos there were in the General Government.[79] Therefore, it seems likely that Heydrich was ordering not the creation of ghettos in the commonly accepted sense but the concentration of Jews in the urban areas where they had traditionally resided.

The greatest challenge to the traditional understanding of the *Schnellbrief* is that not a single ghetto was created by the Einsatzgruppen despite Heydrich's injunction that the measures should be implemented within three to four weeks. Indeed, only one ghetto was established anywhere in this period – in Piotrków Trybunalski in October – and that was at the initiative of the city commissioner Hans Drechsel: more than 10,000 Jews were to be concentrated in just 182 houses by the end of the month.[80] This illustrates that it was the civil administration, rather than the SS, which drove ghettoization and, equally, that there was no coordinated policy. Contrary to popular perception, hardly any ghettos were established in the first months of Nazi rule: by the end of 1939, the number was in single figures.[81] In fact, the peak year for ghetto creation in the GG was actually 1942; that is, once the Holocaust was under way.[82] This was partly a reflection of the absorption of Galicia in 1941. Yet even in

the four original districts of the General Government, it seems that more ghettos were created after the invasion of the Soviet Union than before. In many of these cases, ghettos were a means of concentrating the Jewish populations of several localities in a single site prior to deportation to the death camps. Yet, in others, they were created only after most Jews had been murdered, serving as holding pens for the remnant of workers who had thus far survived. Ghettos were therefore neither a necessary nor a universal precondition for the Holocaust.

For the first year of the General Government's existence, ghettoization was a purely localized phenomenon, dependent on the whim of the individual Kreishauptmann: fewer than 30 ghettos existed by September 1940. The closest that the GG ever came to a systematic process was in the autumn of that year when the establishment of the Warsaw ghetto in November – which forcibly relocated 138,000 Jews and 113,000 Poles – was accompanied by a wave of ghettoization across much of the rest of the district. However, even this came after a year of false starts. Indeed, Frank had banned further ghetto creation across the GG in July 1940 when the Madagascar Plan emerged. Only its failure led to a resumption of planning, egged on by public health officials who argued that a ghetto was essential to prevent epidemics.[83]

The pattern in the other districts was less coherent. Indeed, it is possible that no ghettos at all were established in the Kraków district between the end of 1939 and the spring of 1941. Instead, the capital was one of a number of towns and cities where the opposite occurred: Jews were expelled from, not concentrated in, urban areas. In the case of Kraków, this reflected Frank's wish, expressed on 12 April 1940, that it become 'the most Jew-free city in the General

Government’. It was ‘absolutely intolerable’ that the city to which the Führer had given ‘the high honour’ of being the GG’s capital should let ‘thousands upon thousands of Jews creep around and hold apartments’. Interestingly, Frank referred to the planned expulsions as a cleansing of ‘the ghetto’, another example of the word’s ambiguous usage. This would then allow ‘the erection of clean German housing developments in which one could breathe clean German air’. In the following months, tens of thousands of Jews left Kraków, many by force. Similar language was used to justify the expulsion of most Jews from Kazimierz Dolny in the Lublin district. This ‘beautification’ action found its way into the Baedeker in the book’s only direct reference to the fate of a missing Jewish community: ‘the Jews were resettled’, enabling the transformation of the town to ‘a friendly German resort’.[84]

It was only in the spring of 1941 that ghettos were created in many of the GG’s larger cities, including Kraków, Lublin, Radom and Częstochowa. Even at this time, there were regional variations. Most of the smaller ghettos in the west of the Warsaw district were in fact cleared between January and March and their inhabitants forced, often on foot, to already overcrowded Warsaw in scenes reminiscent of the deportations from the incorporated territories. Chaim Kaplan, a diarist and former school principal, saw ‘trucks full of broken belongings, ruined pillows and blankets in which are hidden frozen babies and old men and women without strength enough to stand on their feet’.[85]

The motives behind these separate waves of concentration in autumn 1940 and spring 1941 were varied. Waldemar Schön, the architect of ghettoization in Warsaw, summarized the official reasons in a report of January 1941: protection from ‘the immune germ-carriers of diseases, the

Jews'; a 'political-moral requirement' to free Poles and local ethnic Germans from the apparently previously dominant influence of Jews; safeguarding of the economy by attacking 'illicit trading and price increases'. Of course, each of these arguments revealed inherent racist mentalities. In addition, the deportations from the incorporated territories, which had resumed in late 1940 and early 1941, had added to the pressure on the housing situation in the GG. The Wehrmacht, despite bringing the cessation of the transports, then caused problems of its own during the immense troop build-up prior to the invasion of the USSR: as Poles were expelled from their homes to accommodate soldiers or to create space for large training grounds, so Jews were often forced into cramped ghettos to free up housing for the Poles.[86]

Even at this stage, most communities – including cities such as Tarnów and Rzeszów – did not have ghettos whilst those that did reflected the lack of a coordinated German policy. The Warsaw ghetto has traditionally dominated perceptions, unsurprisingly given that it contained perhaps as much as one third of the GG's Jewish population in the spring of 1941. However, this was in itself an indication of its untypicality. The Częstochowa ghetto, the next largest, had a population which was approximately one tenth that of Warsaw's whilst only four other ghettos established before Operation Barbarossa (Radom, Lublin, Kielce and Piotrków) ever exceeded 20,000 inhabitants. The overwhelming majority of ghettos created throughout the GG's history – close to 80 per cent – had populations under 5,000; more than a quarter held fewer than 1,000 people. Equally, unlike Warsaw, many ghettos were short-lived: just over half lasted for less than a year, often significantly less. This was most obviously true of the ghettos developed in 1942: in one of

the most extreme cases, Baranów Sandomierski (Kraków district), a ghetto existed for less than three weeks.[87] Yet many earlier ghettos also proved impermanent. Around 20 of the small ghettos created in 1940 were dissolved in early 1941 during the deportations to Warsaw whilst one of the very first ghettos – Puławy in the Lublin district – was abandoned only weeks after its creation in late 1939.

Ghettos were thus characterized by great diversity. Chaim Kaplan astutely observed in March 1941:

> Everything depends on local conditions and on the particular despot on whom our fate depends. There are cities and towns where there is no ghetto, where shrewd authorities are ready to accept bribes. And in places where ghettos have been established, they are not all closed.

Initially, few ghettos were ‘closed’ in the Warsaw sense of isolation from the rest of the town by a wall or fence. Many were, and in some cases remained, ‘open’ ghettos where inhabitants were restricted to a particular part of the city but without physical barriers. The Częstochowa ghetto, for example, had no fence and Poles were allowed to pass through. Other sites, especially *shtetlach* (small towns with predominantly Jewish populations), did not even concentrate Jews in specific areas, but rather forbade them from leaving the town, effectively turning entire communities into ghettos. In the Lublin district, where only one closed ghetto – in Piaski – existed before Aktion Reinhard, a confusing array of quasi-ghettos were created, notably *Sammelorte* (‘assembly points’). These were towns which served as collection centres for Jews expelled from the other communities in the GG or the incorporated

territories.[88] However, although non-closed ghettos offered Jews some greater freedom, especially when it came to acquiring food, they could still be terrifying places. Joseph Schupack, an inhabitant of Radzyń in the Lublin district, commented that although there 'was not a fenced-in ghetto with barbed wire, hardly anyone dared to leave the Jewish section. Venturing outside brought trouble, risks and even danger to one's life.'[89]

This comment indirectly hints that not all Jews feared ghettos, despite their obviously demeaning purpose. Oscar Pinkus, an inhabitant of Łosice in the east of the Warsaw district, noted the 'illusion of safety' generated by 'a purely Jewish community'; ghettoization 'seemed to be the last blow, a retreat where we could live or die undisturbed.' However, in Warsaw, Kaplan was less sure. The city's ghetto, he wrote shortly after its creation, was 'a Jewish state complete in every detail, but a closed, cramped one, imprisoned, mummified within its narrow borders'. Two days earlier, he had left an even more pessimistic entry in his diary: 'A community of half a million people is doomed to die, and awaits the execution of the sentence.'[90]

The very fact that ghettos had not been created as part of a coherent strategy was itself ominous. They had been largely improvised as temporary responses to the failure of the Nazis to find a clear answer to the question of what the Jews' ultimate fate would be. German officials – in the civil administration as much as the SS – saw Jews as a threat, whether in terms of security, public health or economic stability, to be herded into a range of enclosed communities as a holding measure whilst the authorities decided what to do with them next. Ghettoization then paradoxically but inevitably led to the epidemics and smuggling which the Germans feared, further increasing the perceived urgency of

a decisive ‘solution’ to a self-created problem. By the spring of 1941, such a ‘solution’ – in the form of a new destination to which Polish Jews could be deported – loomed on the horizon. Yet it was one which was pursued in an increasingly radical, indeed murderous, atmosphere, suggesting that the GG’s Jews would suffer a terrible fate whether German plans succeeded or failed.

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4
‘Something big is coming’
Barbarossa

THE EFFECTS OF MORE THAN A YEAR OF GERMAN RULE DOMINATED Zygmunt Klukowski’s diary in early 1941. By late February, the doctor was recording the almost daily announcements of the deaths of acquaintances in concentration camps, leading him to lament that from ‘our close group of friends, only I am still here, alone and very sad’.[1] Other entries covered new arrests, the arrival of deportees from Poznań, seizures for work, and the beating of Jewish forced labourers by Szczebrzeszyn’s Polish mayor. This latter incident was one of several which prompted Klukowski to reflect on the ‘shameful behaviour’ of some compatriots, symptoms of the breakdown of social norms brought by the occupation. Other examples included drunkenness, frequent robberies and even denunciation to the Gestapo.[2]

However, springtime found a new theme increasingly appearing in the diary, beginning with an entry on 17 March:

> More and more troops are quartered around us. […] At the airfield construction work continues from early morning until late at night. Air force personnel arrive

> constantly. Motorized traffic is increasing. This seems to be proof that something big is coming.

Similar entries continued in the following weeks, as Klukowski noticed the rapid ‘repair and construction of new roads in the direction of the Russian border’ which brought ever greater military traffic. He was hardly alone. Since the beginning of the year, the Polish underground had been receiving reports from its agents, the implications of which were unmistakeable. Tadeusz Komorowski (code name: ‘Bór’), the future head of the underground army, recalled:

> the numbers of hospital buildings and the arrival of medical equipment on our territory could not be justified by fears of the most serious epidemics or even by the requirements of other German fronts. Considered in conjunction with the number of newly-built airfields, the great stocks of food, the requisitioning of billets for troops, to mention only a few facts, other conclusions had to be drawn.

A crescendo was reached on 21 June when Klukowski recorded that ‘very heavy tanks and other armed vehicles rumbled without interruption throughout the entire night’ and he received orders ‘to have the hospital ready’ to receive casualties. Another entry was added early the next morning – ‘We are sure that war [...] has begun’ – although it was only in the evening that railway workers confirmed the news.[3] The German invasion of the Soviet Union had commenced, and with it the further descent of eastern Europe, including the General Government, into the abyss.

That Operation Barbarossa had a radicalizing impact on Nazi policy is well known, most obviously with regard to the evolution of the Holocaust. Yet it is still often not realized just how far-reaching its implications were, and not merely for Jews and Soviet citizens. Some effects were evident in the GG even before 22 June 1941 since its geographical position inevitably meant that it would be the territory most affected by preparations for the invasion. As already noted, the most immediate change was the final cessation of deportations from the incorporated territories since the Wehrmacht had prior claim on the transport system. Similarly, increased ghettoization in early 1941 was partly a result of the concentration of troops. Longer-term plans were also being developed. The most important of these was one which, ostensibly, did not directly affect the General Government. This was the so-called ‘Hunger Plan’ devised by the Wehrmacht and Backe of the Food Ministry in an attempt to answer the question of how both the army and the German civilian population could be fed during the war in the East, thereby avoiding the shortages which had, so the Nazis believed, contributed to the ‘stab in the back’ in the First World War. In short, the peasant population of the food surplus regions of Ukraine and southern Russia would generally be allowed to subsist, with their surplus produce taken by the Germans. By contrast, northern Russia and Belarus, with their major industrial centres, would form a hunger zone whose inhabitants would starve. Nazi leaders and planners freely spoke of their expectation that between 20 and 30 million people would die. The plan was mercifully never fully implemented since the Germans failed to take Moscow and Leningrad.[4] Nonetheless, the Hunger Plan had wider significance as it illustrated the increasingly genocidal mindset which took hold of the regime in early 1941, even

amongst the supposed moderates of the army and bureaucracy.

This is not to say that the racial fanatics of the SS were not equally busy planning in this period. To a large degree they too focussed on the USSR, as Himmler sought to assert his supremacy over security and racial policy in the soon to be occupied territories. However, the onset of Barbarossa also saw him develop much more ambitious plans for eastern Europe which represented a significant shift in his attitudes, particularly with regard to the General Government. The GG had been central to the Reichsführer's thinking in 1940 but in essentially negative terms, as the dumping ground for populations expelled from the Reich, especially the incorporated territories. This earlier view was expressed in Himmler's notorious memorandum 'Some Thoughts on the Treatment of the Alien Population in the East', which was presented to Hitler in May 1940. Poland – both the GG and the incorporated territories – was to undergo a process of denationalization in which the indigenous population was to be splintered into as many ethnic groups as possible: not only Poles and Jews but also Ukrainians, Belarusians, Górales and so on. These groups – with the exception of Jews, who would disappear completely through 'large-scale emigration [...] to Africa or some other colony' – would in turn be subjected to a process of screening in which the Nazis would 'fish out the racially valuable' and take them to Germany for assimilation. There would be an annual sifting of six-to-ten-year olds in the GG so that 'children of good blood' could be educated and raised in the Reich, with or without their parents' consent. Other Polish children would receive only the most rudimentary schooling:

> simple arithmetic up to 500 at the most, how to write one's name, and to teach that it is God's commandment to be obedient to the Germans and to be honest, hard working, and well-behaved. I consider it unnecessary to teach reading.

The seizure and segregation of children was essential:

> However cruel and tragic each individual case may be, if one rejects the Bolshevik method of physically exterminating a people as fundamentally un-German and impossible, then this method is the mildest and best one.

Deprived of natural elites, each ethnicity would lose any sense of racial identity so that terms such as 'Ukrainian' and eventually even 'Pole' would cease to exist. The population of the General Government would then 'inevitably consist of an inferior remnant', including deportees from the incorporated territories and the Reich proper, who would form 'a leaderless labouring class' which would 'provide Germany with migrant and seasonal workers'.[5] In the pre-Barbarossa era, therefore, Himmler's view was that a small number of inhabitants of the GG could be Germanized but by being brought to Germany. The territory itself was to remain the refuse heap of the Third Reich, useful only as a source of cheap labour.

Frank – whose vanity demanded rather more than being king of a refuse heap, even one with so many material compensations – had spent 1940 inching towards a rather different conception of the General Government's future, albeit one dependent on the whims of Hitler. On 2 March 1940, two days after a meeting with the Führer, Frank was

obliged to tell his officials that they should reject any ‘obsession’ with Germanizing the GG since Hitler still saw it, ‘for the time being’ at least, as ‘the homeland of the Poles’. However, by the time of the AB-Aktion meeting on 30 May, Frank’s tone had changed completely. Hitler, perhaps emboldened by the imminent victory in the West, had apparently promised that large-scale Germanization would occur once the same process had been completed in the incorporated territories, prompting an effusive response from the Governor General:

> How often should we not be surprised when we see a blonde, blue-eyed child that it speaks Polish, and I say to myself: If we would bring up this child as a German, then it would be a beautiful German girl. Thus we see an absolute Germanic racial core in this nation, and developing, cultivating and supporting this racial core will give the possibility in the long term of bringing this area of the General Government to Germandom.[6]

Like Himmler, therefore, Frank saw the possibility of making Polish children German or, as both men would have seen it, recovering them for Germany. The difference in 1940 was that Frank believed that this could lead to the GG itself becoming a German territory, albeit over decades (‘50 or 100 years’) whereas Himmler envisaged the removal of this racially valuable minority to the Reich. The clearest indication of this divergence was the so-called Cholmer Aktion (from the Germanized name of Chełm) of autumn 1940 in which 30,275 ethnic Germans from the Lublin district were transported *from* the General Government to the Warthegau with 28,365 Poles heading in the opposite direction. This operation had its roots in the heyday of the

Lublin reservation project in late 1939 when Frank and Krüger had anticipated that it would be necessary to remove Germans from the planned Jewish territory. However, despite the GG authorities changing their mind, and the Lublin plan being abandoned, Himmler and Globocnik pressed ahead with the operation.[7]

As late as 10 December 1940, Himmler still spoke of the General Government as a dumping ground albeit one which would see 'emigration of the Jews' in the near future. This reflected a memo Eichmann had prepared a few days earlier which had proposed the resettlement of 5.8 million European Jews 'to a territory yet to be determined', clearly meaning the USSR. However, Himmler stressed that this did not fundamentally change the status of the General Government which was to remain 'a labour reservoir': the removal of its Jews was merely 'to make room for more Poles'.[8] Therefore, in January 1941 Heydrich set out a plan to deport more than 800,000 people from the incorporated territories along with 10,000 Vienna Jews in the course of 1941; 238,500 were to arrive by May. When Krüger announced these plans in a meeting on 15 January, Bühler and others raised objections but Frank supported the HSSPF. The operation was 'one of the great tasks the Führer has set the General Government' so any criticism 'out of any vestiges of humanitarian thoughts or considerations of expediency' was impermissible, a typical example of the Governor General's inconstancy and inability to stand up to Hitler.[9]

That this did not reflect Frank's true beliefs can be seen in his euphoric reaction to a meeting with Hitler and Himmler on 17 March which marked a dramatic change of course. Not only were the deportations stopped (in fact, only just over 25,000 people had thus far been deported, the

operation having descended into the usual chaos); as he told his officials on 25 March, an event was coming which would mean that 'the General Government as we know it and as we have developed it will be considerably richer, be happier, will receive more support, and above all, will be de-Jewified'. The GG was to be 'the first territory made free of Jews'. Furthermore, it would also 'lose the characteristic sight of the Polish life that still prevails; for with the Jews, the Poles will also leave this territor**y**' Frank's mood was reflected in a speech he delivered in Kraków a day later: 4 to 5 million Germans would one day live where there were now 12 million Poles. Hitler would say of the GG, as he recently had of Essen, that it was 'the most Aryan Gau in the Reich'. The General Government was to become 'as German a land as the Rhineland'.[10]

Hitler's now clear commitment to Germanization reflected the intoxicating vistas opened up by the imminent invasion. The GG would no longer be the outermost periphery of Nazi Europe but a core element of an empire whose anticipated borders would stretch a thousand kilometres further to the east. Himmler's outlook was similarly transformed. In fact, despite his comments in December 1940, the Reichsführer's attitude towards the GG had already begun to shift, encouraged by his ever eager subordinate in Lublin. Even during the Cholmer Aktion, Globocnik – displaying the radical initiative that his master so valued – had launched an operation in Zamojszczyzna which became known as 'In Search of German Blood' (*Fahndung nach deutschem Blut*). From late 1940, teams of young activists trawled the region armed with anthropological questionnaires seeking to discover the 'submerged' culture of eighteenth-century German settlers who had subsequently become Polonized.[11] This was initially a purely localized operation and one which

was only properly formalized in the spring of 1941. However, together with Barbarossa, it encouraged Himmler to develop far more radical ambitions for the East.

For some time Himmler's staff had been working on plans for the long-term development of the incorporated territories. Within days of the invasion, the Reichsführer asked Professor Konrad Meyer, an agronomist who was chief of the RKFDV's Planning Office and one of many German academics who advanced their careers through the SS, to transform these proposals to match the new settlement possibilities offered by Barbarossa. The result was what became known as Generalplan Ost, the catch-all term for a series of constantly evolving plans presented over the next year. Essentially, Generalplan Ost envisaged the Germanization of the General Government together with much of the occupied Soviet Union. This was to be achieved through the deportation of more than 30 million racial undesirables, including an estimated 80 to 85 per cent of Poles, east of the Urals. Approximately 14 million Slavs would remain as a pool of forced labourers or, for a lucky few, as candidates for Germanization. Germans and other 'Germanic' peoples – such as the Dutch and Norwegians – would be settled in predominantly rural communities concentrated in the GG, parts of Ukraine, the Crimea and the Leningrad region. These communities would be tied together by a series of 'resettlement bases' in major towns and cities, 14 of them in the General Government.[12]

In a sense, therefore, the visions of Himmler and Frank had coalesced by the summer of 1941: both now saw the GG as a future German territory. However, Himmler had in fact overtaken the Governor General in the radicalism of his plans. Frank had stressed in March that Germanization would probably take decades and could not begin until after

the war. By contrast, although completion of Generalplan Ost would require a couple of decades, the Reichsführer believed the process could begin quickly and during the war if necessary. On 17 July 1941 – the day that he gained control over security policy in the USSR – Himmler appointed Globocnik as Commissioner for the Establishment of SS and Police Bases in the New Eastern Area. Since the autumn of 1940, Globocnik, with Himmler's approval, had created a small number of SS estates in the Lublin district. With his grand new title he was entrusted with the creation of similar fortified outposts across the USSR which would form the basis of future settlement policy. The Auschwitz commandant Rudolf Hoess, with whom Globocnik would develop an intense rivalry, commented that this 'pompous busybody' had developed 'fantastic plans for a series of strong-points stretching to the Urals'. In the same context, Himmler visited Lublin on 20 July to give further orders. In addition to expanding the Lipowa Jewish forced labour camp, Himmler approved the creation of new camps in Lublin including a vast complex which would hold 25,000 to 50,000 Soviet POWs. This latter camp – which was to become Majdanek – was intimately linked to the police bases project since it would provide the labour and produce equipment for their construction. Furthermore, the 'In Search of German Blood' operation was to be extended to the whole of the General Government whilst Germanization was to begin within Globocnik's domain with the Old Towns of Lublin and Zamość to be incorporated into plans for new German city centres. Of greater eventual import was the decision to establish 'a large settlement district' around the supposed 'German colonies near Zamość'.[13] By the time this operation began in the autumn, both Himmler and Globocnik had far more radical ideas for the GG in mind.

For his part, Frank saw the invasion as a chance not only to quickly clear the GG of Jews but also to expand his territory. In the summer of 1941 he petitioned for a large swathe of the Kresy, Poland's prewar eastern borderlands. He was particularly keen to acquire the Pripet marshes region to the east of Brześć (Brest-Litovsk), where he hoped to deploy Jews and Poles as forced labour. However, Frank was only one of several Nazi grandees seeking to carve up the new East. On 17 July, Hitler decided that the Governor General would have to be content with the province of Galicia. Although the possibility of further gains was held out, and Frank continued to push for them, this was to prove his only conquest.[14]

The absorption of Galicia increased the area of the GG by more than 50 per cent and its population by close to 5 million whilst bringing an economic boon in the form of the oil industry around Borysław and Drohobycz.[15] In other respects, however, this was a proverbially poor and backward region and, furthermore, one in the grip of an acute political and social crisis in 1941, a reflection of both the growth of radical nationalism and the calamity of Soviet rule. Galicia had its roots in a medieval proto-Ukrainian kingdom but had spent most of its history under the Polish crown before falling, together with the Kraków region, to the Habsburgs in the partition era.[16] In stark contrast to the original GG, a majority of inhabitants were Ukrainians, mostly peasants, though the cities and towns were dominated by Poles and Jews. More or less peaceful coexistence between these various ethnic groups had been weakened since the late nineteenth century by the emergence of conflict between the awakening Ukrainian nationalist movement, which saw Galicia as an eastern Piedmont which could one day form the basis of an

independent Ukrainian state, and Poles for whom Lwów – the only large city – was an unassailable bastion of Polish civilization in the Kresy. Under the relatively benign sovereignty of the Habsburgs, this struggle had largely consisted of arguments over issues such as schools and voting rights. However, it had turned violent at the end of the First World War when the Austro-Hungarian Empire's collapse precipitated a vicious conflict which left a legacy of considerable bitterness on both sides as well as a trail of pogroms against the region's Jews.

The situation had further deteriorated in independent Poland.[17] Representatives of the state had mostly pushed a policy of Polonization to which the principal Ukrainian nationalist movement, the Ukrainian National Democratic Alliance (UNDO), responded with a mixture of political and economic boycotts and attempts at compromise.[18] However, the post-1918 conflict had radicalized a younger generation of activists who coalesced around an ideology of integral nationalism – manifested in hostility to Poles, Jews and the Soviet Union – through the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists (OUN) created in 1929. The OUN launched a terrorist campaign against the Polish regime, in the hope of provoking reprisals which would radicalize the population, whilst also targeting the UNDO moderates, a strategy which bore some fruit.

The Soviet invasion of 1939, after a brief German occupation, thus exacerbated an already unstable situation. As a Jewish refugee from Warsaw put it, to 'maintain peace and order in these circumstances without favouring or harming one group requires great diplomatic skill on the part of the Soviet authorities, who demonstrate it only to a minimal degree'.[19] Poles, as the political and economic elite, were hit hardest by the early Soviet repressions.[20] By

contrast, some Ukrainians and Jews, especially younger people, initially welcomed the Red Army. Elsa Binder, a young Jewish woman in Stanisławów, later remembered how with ‘triumphant smiles on our faces, we quickly ran toward the heavy tanks and in humble admiration and gratitude we bowed down before the red flag’. Karolina Lanckorońska, who was in Lwów at the time, noted that ‘Ukrainian committees began to spread like mushrooms overnight’. Such committees often released nationalist political prisoners who, not infrequently, began terrorizing Poles.[21] Though relatively few Ukrainians and Jews were Communists, their reasons for welcoming the Soviets were not hard to fathom. Both groups had seen their rights restricted, especially in education, under a Polish regime and civil society which had often been at their most nationalistic in Galicia; Communism, with its internationalist message (if seldom practice), appeared more attractive in this respect. For Ukrainians there was the added incentive of what appeared to be a form of statehood, however imperfect. For the first time in history, the whole of Ukraine had been united, even if only as a Soviet republic. For Jews, especially the tens of thousands of refugees from the German-controlled areas, the reason for the gratitude expressed by Elsa Binder was obvious.

However, the Soviet occupation had quickly turned sour for almost all concerned. Inhabitants of Galicia constituted a significant proportion of the 315,000 people deported from across the Kresy in a series of operations mainly concentrated in 1940. A great many more suffered from the confiscation of businesses and land, the stifling of religion and what Lanckorońska termed the ‘dull lethargy’ of life under Communism. Although Ukrainians were initially favoured in appointments to positions they could never

have aspired to under Polish rule, they were typically soon displaced by arrivals from Kiev. Many nationalists – Polish and Ukrainian – blamed Galicia's Jews for the catastrophe. Zygmunt Sobieski, a Polish citizen of Lwów, asserted that Jews 'were trusted by the Soviet occupation authorities unreservedly, a fact which largely accounts for subsequent antisemitic tendencies'. This statement was wrong on both counts. The more astute Lanckorońska, whilst still claiming Jewish preponderance in the security organs, noted 'the NKVD's extreme anti-Semitism'. Indeed, one of the largest deportation operations – in June 1940 – had almost entirely targeted Jewish refugees from the GG. Nonetheless, numerous sources attest to the widespread *perception* that Jews had welcomed and supported Communism. In a nuanced report presented to the government-in-exile in early 1940, the underground courier Jan Kozielewski (better known by his code name 'Karski') acknowledged that many Jews in the Kresy were Polish patriots and showed understanding of why others might not have been. However, he confessed that nearly 'all Poles are bitter and disappointed in relation to the Jews'.[22] Of greater importance for what followed was the attitude of Ukrainian nationalists.

The leadership of the OUN had found a base in Frank's realm even before the incorporation of Galicia. Although Ukrainians formed only around 5 per cent of the population of the General Government in its pre-1941 borders, they were concentrated in enclaves in the Lublin and Kraków districts and many had welcomed the Germans in 1939 much as some of their compatriots had greeted the Red Army in Galicia. Activists had then spontaneously created Ukrainian national committees in a number of areas and petitioned Frank for permission to establish an umbrella

organization for the whole GG. This was granted, resulting in the formation of the Ukrainian Central Committee (UTsK) in the spring of 1940 under the leadership of Volodymyr Kubiiovych, a geographer ostensibly without party ties but in fact supported by one faction of the OUN. Frank's strategy was in part one of divide and rule, seeking to secure Ukrainian support through a relatively privileged position compared to that of Poles and Jews. As he put it in September 1940, the Ukrainians may have been friends of the German people but could not be intimate allies: officials should 'maintain the best relations with the Ukrainians' yet also 'keep the necessary distance'. Nonetheless, his policy brought Ukrainians tangible benefits, especially in the fields of education and the economy. For example, the number of Ukrainian cooperatives increased from 212 in 1939 to 995 by early 1941. Kraków became the cultural capital of Ukrainian nationalism, swelled by refugees from Galicia who raised its Ukrainian population from around 1,000 in 1939 to almost 10,000 in 1941.[23]

The UTsK's mandate was officially limited to social welfare and cultural work but nationalists saw in it a vehicle to advance political interests. The prospects for this appeared to have been undermined by a split in the OUN in early 1940 between supporters of the existing leadership of Andrii Mel'nyk and a more radical group, many of them younger activists released from Polish prisons by the Germans, who followed the terrorist Stepan Bandera. Although the two factions – OUN-M and OUN-B (from the initials of their leaders) – fought violently in Kraków for supremacy, both pursued a strategy of cooperation with the Germans. At a local level, this took the form of enrolment in ethnic Ukrainian auxiliary police forces which encompassed more than 1,000 recruits in the Kraków and Lublin districts by

early 1942. However, the preparations for Barbarossa saw more radical moves, with OUN-B activists organized into paramilitary formations under German leadership.[24]

Both factions of the OUN hoped that the Germans would permit the establishment of an independent Ukrainian state, at least in Galicia. Thus, when the Wehrmacht invaded, accompanied by Ukrainian units, it was widely greeted as a liberator. Jan Kott, a young Polish writer of Jewish ancestry, noted that in Lwów even those who had 'served the Communists zealously, now put on the blue and yellow arm band'.[25] When the city fell on 30 June 1941, local OUN-B units proclaimed Ukrainian independence. These hopes were almost immediately dashed and many leaders (including Bandera in Kraków) were arrested by the Germans. Nonetheless, both wings of the OUN largely continued to work with the Nazis since the occupation appeared to offer the achievement of other short-term goals, notably the aim of an ethnically homogenous Ukraine.

The impact of this fragile alliance was most evident in a wave of German and OUN-perpetrated racist violence which swept Galicia in the weeks following the invasion. By mid-July alone, around 10,000 Jews had been murdered. Many fell victim to pogroms, especially in Lwów, where around 4,000 people were killed at the hands of nationalist mobs between 30 June and 3 July. The ostensible cause of these massacres was the discovery of the mutilated bodies of political prisoners hastily slaughtered by the NKVD prior to the Soviet retreat. Although Poles and Jews had been the principal victims of Soviet repressions in 1940, those murdered in June 1941 were mainly Ukrainian activists arrested in the weeks immediately prior to the invasion. As the supposed carriers of Communism, Jews were blamed. However, it is important to note that pogroms also occurred

in places where no Soviet atrocities had taken place. This is generally taken to be an indication that the murders of Jews were instigated by OUN activists, both amongst the invading forces and in underground cells already in Galicia.[26] However, the killings were also a collaborative effort with the Germans. As is well known, new German Einsatzgruppen – established by Heydrich in spring 1941 – spread murder across the occupied USSR: Einsatzgruppe C began killings in Galicia as early as 27 June, with assistance from Ukrainian militias. Even after Einsatzgruppe C had rapidly moved on to central Ukraine, units of a new Einsatzgruppe z.b.V., formed in Kraków in June 1941, carried out further murders before fanning out across Galicia to establish a rudimentary police apparatus. Although Jews were overwhelmingly the victims, Polish elites were also targeted in an echo of the AB-Aktion. On the night of 3–4 July, agents of Einsatzgruppe z.b.V., armed with prepared lists, arrested 23 professors from Lwów University, all but one of whom were shot the next morning. The former prime minister Kazimierz Bartel, who had been arrested a day earlier, was shot later in the month.[27]

It was in this murderous climate that Galicia was officially incorporated into the General Government on 1 August 1941 with a suitably pompous state visit by Frank.[28] The extremist tempo was maintained by the new administration, in an exaggerated repetition of the events of 1939. The same struggle to find staff was evident so that by the end of October only one third of posts in the civil administration were filled. Most officials were sent from the original GG and tended to represent the least attractive faces of German rule. A notable example was Gerhard Hager, transferred from Chełm to become Kreishauptmann of Tarnopol. An alcoholic who had quarrelled with Globocnik, Hager had established one of the earliest ghettos in the Lublin district

whilst embezzling Jewish property on a large scale, a practice he continued in his new fiefdom. A similar pattern was true with the police, who as usual had a head start on the civil administration. Officers of Einsatzgruppe z.b.V. ensconced themselves in key centres across the district, as in the case of its second city where Hans Krüger, murderer of the Lwów professors and countless Jews, established himself as the 'King of Stanisławów'. The new SSPF was Fritz Katzmann, only 35 years old, who had previously performed the same role in the Radom district. In Galicia, he would prove to be the only police leader to even remotely resemble Globocnik in the scale of his freedom of manoeuvre and the radicalism of his independent initiative. Katzmann was following his nominal former boss, the similarly youthful Karl Lasch, whom Frank had nominated as governor in late July. The presence of Lasch was a further indication that the worst features of the GG were magnified in Galicia. Indeed, the district's reputation for corruption became so bad that it was nicknamed '*Skandalizien*'.[29]

For Ukrainians, this nakedly colonial regime was hardly what they had hoped for, especially since it was followed by further repressions. In September, Bandera and other OUN-B leaders, who were being held in Berlin under effective house arrest, were dispatched to Sachsenhausen, albeit as privileged prisoners. Furthermore, Lasch's regime largely failed to restore property nationalized by the Soviets whilst subjecting Galicia to the same economic depredations already inflicted on the rest of the GG. Nonetheless, most activists continued to work with the Germans, still seeing the occupation as a means of advancing their agenda. Lwów (L'viv in Ukrainian) was allowed to develop as a centre of Ukrainian intellectual life, accompanied by an expansion of Ukrainian schools across the district, in marked contrast to

neighbouring Reichskommissariat Ukraine, whose brutal overlord Erich Koch publicly referred to Ukrainians as ‘niggers’. A particular attraction for nationalists was the creation in August 1941 of an auxiliary police force, which was seen as a key component in state-building. By spring 1942, the Germans had recruited more than 4,000 men, many drawn from OUN militias, out of the tens of thousands who had applied. Similarly, the chronic shortage of German personnel meant that lower-level administration was – with the notable exception of Lwów – largely in the hands of Ukrainians.[30] Many, though not all, nationalists thus welcomed the emergence of Ukrainian-dominated institutions as a precursor of a future independent state.

A further reason for collaboration with the Germans was the expectation that the Nazis would advance the OUN’s aim of a Ukraine purged of non-Ukrainians, especially Jews. In a meeting of assorted nationalist leaders in Lwów in mid-July, Stepan Lenkavs’kyi (the OUN-B’s propaganda chief) called for the adoption of ‘any methods that lead to their destruction’.[31] Other motives were also at play. Philip Friedman, a survivor and later a noted historian of the Holocaust in Galicia, recalled that even previously friendly Ukrainians ‘were now eager to demonstrate their anti-Semitism, since this was a quick means of acquiring wealth, prestige, and power in the new political constellation’. It was hardly surprising, therefore, that local Ukrainian officials joined the Germans in imposing anti-Jewish measures, as in Lwów where the creation of a Judenrat on 22 July was ordered by a short-lived Ukrainian municipality.[32]

The incorporation of Galicia into the General Government did at least spare its Jews the escalation of the mass shootings which characterized the rest of the occupied USSR in the late summer of 1941, although massacres still took

place. The most notable of these was in Stanisławów, recently transferred from Hungarian military administration, where Hans Krüger organized the murder of around 600 Jewish and Polish members of the intelligentsia on 2 August. Frank, who had acquired more than half a million additional Jewish citizens with Galicia, was instead looking forward to the imminent deportation of the GG's Jews. Following a promise made to him by Hitler in mid-June, he banned the construction of new ghettos on 17 July on the grounds that the Jews were to be removed 'in the foreseeable future'. Henceforth, the GG would serve only as 'a transit camp' for expulsion further east. It was on the following day that Frank petitioned for the Pripet marshes, partly in the hope that this region could serve as an initial holding pen for Jews who could then be put to deadly work draining the swamps. Although he was disappointed in this respect, he still expected that the occupied territory of the USSR would finally provide the territorial 'solution' which the Nazis had been seeking since 1939. On 21 July, he spoke of the 'coming clearance' of the GG which would begin with 'the dissolution of the Warsaw ghetto'.[33]

These statements reflected the wave of euphoria which swept the Nazi leadership in the summer as they anticipated a quick victory over the Soviet Union. This mood began to dissipate in the autumn as the German advance slowed. Although hopes were again raised by a string of victories in early October, it was becoming increasingly evident that Stalin's empire was more resilient than expected. On 13 October, Frank met Alfred Rosenberg in Berlin to discuss the possibility of unloading his Jews in the latter's domain east of the GG. Rosenberg's reply was that this was not possible although he promised to facilitate it in

the future.[34] It was clear that the Jews would be remaining in the GG for at least another winter.

Frank still expressed his hope for deportations in meetings over the next ten days and reiterated the ban on ghetto-building on 21 October. However, a growing number of his supposed subordinates were becoming restless, prompting them to act on their own initiative. In Tarnopol, Hager issued an order for ghettoization in September, despite Frank's ban, whilst Lasch in Lwów and Hans Krüger in Stanisławów were also making plans for ghettos, plans which were to have fatal consequences. Even more significant developments were occurring in the Lublin district. In a report to Berlin of 15 October on the Germanization programme, Hellmuth Müller, an official in Globocnik's private research unit, wrote that the SSPF

> sees the gradual cleansing of the whole G.G. of Jews and also Poles to be necessary for the purpose of securing the Eastern territories. He is in this context full of far-reaching and good plans.

Two days prior to this report, on the same day that Frank was disappointed by Rosenberg, Globocnik and Himmler had also met to take a decision – arguably the most momentous in the history of the General Government – which would set in motion the most far-reaching of these plans.[35]

Just as one genocide was beginning, another was already being perpetrated in the autumn of 1941. On 24 September Klukowski watched the passage of 600 Soviet POWs – 'very tired and already showing signs of malnutrition' – through Szczebrzeszyn. They were followed on 4 October by a much larger group of around 15,000 whose condition was far

worse: ‘They all looked like skeletons, just shadows of human beings, barely moving.’ When another convoy entered the town on the following day, the Germans shot at the prisoners as they fought for food left on the roadside by Szczebrzeszyn’s citizens.[36]

These unfortunates formed just a fraction of the hundreds of thousands of Red Army soldiers brought to the General Government from the summer of 1941 onwards. From the very beginning of the invasion, the Germans had captured huge numbers of prisoners, tens of thousands of whom were shot in the Soviet territories under the terms of the notorious Commissar Order of June 1941. Many more fell victim to a calculated policy pursued by the Nazi regime in general and the Wehrmacht in particular which resulted in the deaths of approximately 2 million of the estimated 3.3 million prisoners captured before February 1942. Although most fatalities occurred in the USSR, the General Government was also a principal theatre of this tragedy as the site of POW camps, especially in the Lublin district.[37]

Prisoners had to endure horrific journeys, often for hundreds of miles, on foot or in open freight cars, frequently in freezing conditions. The consequences were recorded by a German soldier stationed in Biała Podlaska in October 1941: ‘prisoners are unloaded, collapsing from hunger; amongst them boys of 13 to 15. Yesterday, when unloading, we found eight dead bodies.’ The camps themselves were makeshift affairs completely unprepared to receive so many inmates. One Wehrmacht corporal ordered to organize a camp in the Lublin district reported on 6 October that 10,000 prisoners arrived in just two days even though ‘the huts are not yet complete. You cannot imagine what is going on here. This gang is terribly exhausted and famished.’ That what followed was more than the result of simple

incompetence was demonstrated by his later comments: ‘This is a nation of nothing but criminals [...] a gang of utter savages, only to be mastered by force.’[38]

‘Of course,’ wrote a private stationed in Chełm, site of one of the largest camps, ‘we are not petting them.’ What this meant was recorded by a local Pole:

> The marl soil on which the camp stands turns after rain into thick mud, in which the prisoners must sleep, without even a handful of straw. Food is worse than poor. The prisoners are actually dying of hunger and eat grass, straw and odd bits from the refuse heap. An epidemic of dysentery is spreading alarmingly among them. They are black with dirt, and eaten up by lice. [...] Prisoners are dying at the rate of 400–500 daily.

The deadliest camp was Stalag 307, initially a large open field in Biała Podlaska. Following an outbreak of spotted typhus in October, the prisoners were transferred to a fortress in Dęblin which was totally incapable of accommodating them. Thousands were left in the open in temperatures which fell as low as –25°C; one well existed for the more than 100,000 inmates. An estimated 80 per cent of them died over the course of the winter.[39]

Approximately 54,000 POWs died across the GG up to 20 October 1941; in the next ten days, 45,690 lost their lives. Alongside the freezing conditions, the single greatest cause of the spiralling death rates was starvation, with numerous reports of desperate prisoners eating grass and bark. In October the Wehrmacht had reduced the rations for non-working prisoners in a clear manifestation of the Hunger Plan. The racist mentalities inherent in this decision were also reflected in extraordinary brutality on the part of the

guards. In Chełm, for example, naked prisoners were tied to the fence on tiptoe and slowly hanged. Belatedly, the Germans decided in late 1941 to exploit POW labour, leading to slightly improved rations and accommodation. However, this decision came too late for most. Of the estimated 361,612 inmates held in the GG between June 1941 and 15 April 1942, 292,560 died in the camps. A further 17,256 were taken out of the camps and shot by the police. In total, therefore, around 310,000 people – more than 85 per cent of the POWs – lost their lives in by far the largest act of murder yet perpetrated in the General Government.[40]

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5
‘The second war’
Everyday life

On 13 March 1943 Kraków’s main station was treated to a rare visit by the Governor General. The occasion was the departure of a train carrying workers to Germany, in itself an unremarkable event. This, however, was no ordinary transport for it was judged to include the 1 millionth labourer to be sent to the Reich. It also carried, so the authorities asserted, the 250,000th from the Kraków district on what was apparently the 2,000th train from the GG (although such happy synchronicity might lead cynics to doubt the veracity of these claims). Standing on the platform, Frank honoured the assembled travellers with an uncharacteristically brief speech:

> In the name of the administration of the General Government I would like to thank the Polish and Ukrainian population of this region for the participation and cooperation that they have shown towards the Reich to date. We have today the great fortune to bid farewell to the 1,000,000th worker from the General Government on his journey to the Reich.

Frank then turned to one lucky soul:

> That is you; you travel now to Germany, and I thank you for that. As a sign of this, that you are now the 1,000,000th worker, I present you with a gold watch. It belongs to you, take it.

The Governor General proceeded to promise that the workers would receive ‘decent treatment’, a manifestation of the ‘new coming Europe in which peoples could develop peacefully and healthily’ under ‘the great victorious Reich of Adolf Hitler’.[1]

This was Frank in his preferred role of enlightened despot distributing the fruits of his beneficence to grateful subjects. He had expressed himself in rather different terms almost three years earlier during a meeting which had essentially set in motion the chain of events leading to the joyous train-side ceremony. When Herbert Backe of the Food Ministry had visited Kraków on 23 April 1940, he had demanded more forceful measures to provide the agricultural workers Germany needed whilst also informing Frank that the Reich was not prepared to support the General Government with food supplies. Reflecting on the implications, the Governor General had adopted the stance of ruthless Old Fighter that was his default posture when faced with more radical Nazis from the Reich, especially those with Hitler’s support. The GG’s Jews, he said, ‘do not interest me at all. Whether they have something to scoff or not is my very last concern.’ Poles would get only what the administration could spare since they ‘interest me only insofar as I see in them a reservoir of labour’ and certainly not to the extent that Frank felt obliged to ‘issue a guarantee that they would get such and such’ an amount: ‘we don’t speak of rations for

Poles, but only of the possibility of feeding.' The latter point was qualified by an acknowledgment that certain groups of essential workers, along with Ukrainians, would receive better treatment. Nonetheless, this was hardly the peaceful and healthy development which Frank was to later extol in public. Rather unnecessarily, as if Backe could have missed the point, he concluded by repeating himself: 'For the Jews we have no interest at all.'[2]

Work and food – and the not always obvious relationship between them – were overriding concerns for the majority of the GG's inhabitants throughout the occupation. This is not to say that all suffered equally. Most obviously, the experience of the Jewish population was qualitatively different to that of Gentiles. Furthermore, not all Poles, still less members of other ethnic groups, entirely lost out. Nonetheless, for most people everyday life was an elemental struggle for survival. As Czesław Miłosz, a young poet and socialist activist who spent most of the war in Warsaw, put it, 'every new day was a gift that defied probability'.[3]

The search for food was the greatest challenge of all. Under a barrage of complaints from Frank and his regime in late 1939, the Reich had decided to supply grain from the incorporated territories to the food deficit zone of the GG for the 1939–40 year. However, as Backe made clear to Frank, this was a one-off: the General Government would in future have to be self-sufficient.[4] This would have been a near impossibility at the best of times and these were hardly the best of times. The influx of hundreds of thousands of deportees from the incorporated territories in 1940, even if not on the scale originally anticipated, put further strain on the food supply, but the greatest burden was the Germans

themselves. The initial cause was the Wehrmacht. Frank's administration reluctantly agreed in early 1940 to supply the army with essential foodstuffs although the deliveries proved to be less than hoped: in the 1940–1 harvest year, the military received only 40,000 of the 55,000 tonnes of grain it had demanded.[5] Of greater impact was the unregulated seizure or purchase of food by soldiers, especially in the spring of 1941 when 2 million were stationed in the GG in advance of Barbarossa.

Far greater demands were placed on the General Government in the aftermath of the invasion in line with the Nazi obsession that German civilians should not lose out. The GG was thus expected to supply the Reich with more than 500,000 tonnes of grain per annum from 1942 onwards. Although slight reductions were occasionally negotiated, the impact was immense. Whereas in the 1941–2 year grain deliveries to the Reich and the Wehrmacht represented 1.88 per cent of the harvest, in the following year they formed 18.44 per cent. Frank's reaction was typical. In August 1942, after Backe and Göring had insisted on the vastly higher deliveries, the Governor General noted that this would have severe economic consequences since the already insufficient living conditions of workers and their families would deteriorate further, damaging productivity. The problem could be slightly alleviated by allowing Jews to starve, a somewhat superfluous issue during the most intense killing period of Aktion Reinhard. Nonetheless, 'before the German people face a famine', Poles too would 'be surrendered to starvation':

> you must always bear in mind that it is still much better that a Pole collapses than that the German goes

> under. That we are sentencing 1.2 million Jews to death by starvation is noted only in the margin.[6]

The administration did attempt to increase agricultural productivity through various modernization programmes, including the use of chemical fertilizers and mechanization, but these measures brought only modest rises in yields which never returned to prewar levels.[7] In practice, therefore, the essential German aim in wartime was not so much to increase the harvest as to take a greater share of it. Delivery quotas were introduced for farmers in early 1940 and grew as the war progressed: whereas they represented approximately 27 per cent of the harvest in 1940–1 and 1941–2, the quotas exceeded 40 per cent for the next two years. However, the setting of fixed prices for deliveries gave peasants little incentive, leading Frank to complain in May 1940 that they preferred to eat their food rather than sell it.[8]

As a result, the Germans deployed a carrot and stick approach, although the stick eventually proved rather longer. A bonus system was introduced in spring 1940 whereby farmers were given the opportunity to buy restricted items such as textiles, sugar and cigarettes at officially set prices. However, the supply of these goods was predictably erratic and they still remained unaffordable for most peasants given the prices the Germans paid them for their food. By contrast, they could make far more selling on the black market. Increasingly, therefore, the regime resorted to punitive measures. As in so many areas of policy, the earliest such actions were initiated at a local level. One of the pioneers was Ernst Gramß, last encountered musing on the benefits of exterminating Warsaw’s Jews. Shortly after his appointment as the

Kreishauptmann of Sokołów in the Warsaw district in the summer of 1940, Gramß led a ‘punishment expedition’ against recalcitrant peasants in which many were beaten. Such methods soon became the norm, especially after only 45 per cent of the grain quota was delivered in the 1940–1 year.[9] Both the police and the army were deployed in collection whilst the uncooperative faced threats ranging from fines to forced labour, imprisonment and expropriation of their farms. An especially powerful tactic was the appointment of prominent local citizens – such as priests, doctors and teachers – as members of quota committees which were tasked with ensuring delivery. In effect, these people were held as hostages who stood to lose their freedom or worse in the event of failure. In other cases, the principle of collective responsibility was extended further. For example, in early 1942 the Germans withheld bread from every community in Janów Lubelski Kreis which failed to meet its quota. Such measures were successful to some extent. As early as November 1940, Klukowski was noting the punctual delivery of grain in Szczebrzeszyn by peasants fearing arrest. Although targets for grain were never quite met, they were fulfilled by typically 90 per cent in the years that followed despite the much higher demands.[10] However, the effects on the civilian population were catastrophic.

The biggest losers were the cities since the population was effectively divided into two categories: the countryside would feed itself whilst urban residents would be limited to minimal rations. A complex and ever evolving system was created whereby rations were allocated according to ethnicity and economic status. There were also differences between localities in practice. For example, in the Radom district in September 1940, Poles were permitted 6 kg of bread per month in Opoczno but 30 kg in Jędrzejów. Despite

these variations, the rationing system had two defining features. The first was that for all groups apart from Germans it was utterly inadequate for survival. The average ration for the Polish population in 1941 provided only 29.1 per cent of the daily calorific intake recommended by the League of Nations; for Jews it was 7.7 per cent. The situation deteriorated further when the increased food deliveries to the Reich in late 1942 led to a decision to cut off rations not only to Jews but to Poles who were not working in industries deemed essential. Average calorific intake of rations for Poles thus fell to 17.3 per cent of the League norms in 1943, by which time rations for Jews were irrelevant. This decision was later modified, but even then Frank revealed more than he intended when he told Adam Ronikier, the head of the main Polish welfare organization, in July 1943 that henceforth 'no working person will have to starve *anymore*'. In practice, rations in the GG were lower than anywhere else in Nazi-occupied Europe apart from the USSR. In spring 1943, the standard bread ration was 40.4 per cent of that in the incorporated territories; the ration for potatoes was 27.5 per cent.[11]

The other distinctive aspect was the fact that even these meagre official quantities were frequently not actually supplied. 'During all of 1942,' recalled Jan Karski, 'I never tasted butter or sugar.' Kazimierz Wyka, a literary scholar who spent the war in Krzeszowice (the site of Frank's summer residence, which made its own very special food deliveries to Germany), wrote in 1945: 'I did not *legally* consume so much as one gram of lard, one drop of milk, one slice of sausage.' However, as Wyka continued, 'quite a lot of these foods came my way – and there were millions like me'. Many enterprising city dwellers grew vegetables in any green space they could find, with parks and courtyards

turned into makeshift allotments. Miriam Wattenberg, a teenager in the Warsaw ghetto, noted in her diary the appearance of the first ‘little green radish leaves’ in March 1942. ‘We have’, she added, ‘also planted onion, carrots, turnips, and other things.’ Some resorted to scavenging, as in the case of Jarosław Ciechanowicz, a Warsaw boy whose father had died during the September campaign: ‘not far from our house was a hospital, where we used to go and collect potato peelings, which we ground afterwards and baked on the stove’.[12]

However, the essential lifeline for most was a black market which assumed such immense proportions in the General Government that it gave rise to the following popular joke:

Question:	How could the Allied armies land on the continent in such a way that the Germans would not notice?
Answer:	Entrust the Polish black market with the task … and rest easy.

Townspeople travelled often great distances to barter their possessions for food in the villages whilst peasants or their middlemen – or often middlewomen – went in the opposite direction to procure higher prices in the cities. The trains were thus packed with illegal traders, in league with the conductors, who found imaginative ways of avoiding German searches. Maria Brzeska, whose account of life in Kraków and Warsaw was published in London during the war, observed:

> It sometimes happens that something ‘goes wrong’ with the locomotive just before the train reaches some station where searches are a normal procedure. The train comes to a halt in the open field, the smugglers with their baskets and rucksacks get out and scatter, and make their way to the town by other, secret ways when all is quiet.

Karski witnessed a similar incident when ‘a swarm’ of smugglers jumped off a train before Lublin: ‘I could easily detect loaves of bread, sacks of flour, ham, and sides of bacon. Like a flock of birds, they flew from the train and disappeared quickly into the forest.’ A legendary tale which circulated widely during the occupation had it that German police, unable to contain their mirth, had once discovered a dead pig disguised as a peasant woman on a train.[13]

As such incidents demonstrated, the Germans did seek to stop illegal trading. However, it was only possible on such a scale thanks to the susceptibility to material inducement of other (or sometimes the same) officials. Bronisław Schatten, the Jewish intellectual hiding out as a Polish estate manager west of Kraków, negotiated a series of imaginative deals with the local agricultural cooperative responsible for food deliveries and its German inspectors, ‘a band of get-rich-quick artists onto a good thing’. In the most spectacular arrangement, Schatten bribed the cooperative to record deliveries of the estate’s milk, which had actually been sold on the black market. The subterfuge proved so successful that the farm was recognized as the most punctual milk supplier in the entire region, bringing it prizes whose value ‘exceeded the amount we paid to the cooperative for the non-delivery of milk’.[14]

The black market was at its most essential in the growing number of ghettos. Open ghettos initially offered better opportunities to secure supplies, as in Otwock near Warsaw where one resident, Calek Perechodnik, found that ‘there was no shortage of apartments or food’ when the ghetto was created in late 1940. By contrast, the overcrowded and walled Warsaw ghetto faced catastrophic conditions from the moment of its creation. On 19 November 1940, just four days after the ghetto was sealed, Emanuel Ringelblum noted a ‘real orgy of high prices’ and ‘long queues in front of every food store’. Smuggling thus became a vital activity, carried out by every means possible. Both Ringelblum and Chaim Kaplan recorded in early 1941 the trams which still passed through the ghetto slowing down to enable Poles to jump off and sell their wares. The conductors, Kaplan believed, ‘made fortunes’.[15]

As the noose around the ghetto tightened, smuggling over the walls or even through its gates increased. As early as 22 November 1940, Miriam Wattenberg – who lived on the ghetto’s southern edge – was recording the night-long ‘commotion’ as bread, sugar, butter and cheese were brought in.[16] Children played an essential role, celebrated in Henryka Łazowertówna’s poem ‘The Little Smuggler’:

> Over the walls, through holes, through guard posts,
> Through the wire, through the rubble, through the fence,
> Hungry, cheeky, stubborn,
> I slip through, I nip through like a cat.[17]

Sometimes their passage was facilitated by kind-hearted German guards, especially, noted Wattenberg, ‘the older ones, who must have little children of their own at home’. More often, other motives were at work. A Jewish ghetto

policemen related in May 1942 how things usually worked: a German guard would ask for ‘a bottle of whiskey, or a bar of chocolate, or possibly a cake of soap’. The Jewish policeman ‘would reply that he had no money for it but may make it if the [German] gendarme permits the passage into the Ghetto of a cart with potatoes or with flour or with other food’. So lucrative were such deals that some Germans ‘took to paying their officers for assignment to a post where smuggling was extensive’. Of course, there were guards less willing to turn a blind eye, as recalled by Elżbieta Jeziorska, a Polish child living close to the wall: ‘the drama of children tangled up in the wire on ulica Śliska was played out every day. […] All that could be heard were screams, crying, laments and cursing in German.’ Not without reason did Ringelblum endorse the proposal of the lawyer Leon Berenson to erect ‘a monument to the memory of the Unknown Smuggler’.[18]

The black market was the most obvious symptom of the emergence of two parallel economies in the General Government: the official economy regulated by the Germans and what Wyka, author of a 1945 essay which remains the most penetrating analysis of life in the GG, termed the ‘excluded economy’ (*gospodarka wyłączona*). However, although the latter was essential for existence, and offered a minority the chance to make fortunes, it had profoundly distorting effects. Nowhere was this more apparent than in the field of work where a paradox rapidly emerged. On the one hand, a job was essential. Not only did it lessen – though by no means eliminate – the threat of labour conscription; it also brought both a wage and higher rations. Posts in the armaments industries of the Radom district were particularly sought after since they appeared to offer the greatest security and benefits; HASAG’s largest factory,

in Skarżysko-Kamienna, took employees from up to 35 kilometres away. On the other hand, the wages that nearly all workers received were laughably insufficient to meet the costs of supplementing their pathetic rations on the black market. For example, whereas average hourly wage rates in Warsaw had increased by almost 50 per cent from prewar levels by mid-1941, living costs had grown in the same period by more than 1,500 per cent. Bread prices – the supreme barometer of the black market – hovered at around 4,000 per cent of prewar levels for the remainder of the occupation. Although Warsaw was typically the worst affected, food costs were high everywhere. Take, for example, the village of Krajno in the Radom district where the irrelevant official price of rationed bread in 1941 was half a złoty. Dawid Rubinowicz, a 13-year-old Jewish boy, noted in his diary in May that 'only recently a loaf cost five złotys and now it already costs ten złotys. In this way everything gets so expensive that you can't buy anything with money. This'll be the second war.'[19]

The inevitable result of spiralling food prices was, as Wyka noted, that the majority of the population 'had to repudiate completely any work ethic' in order to survive.[20] Time spent at work was time not spent in black market activity, a phenomenon eloquently expressed by the most popular joke of the period. Two friends who have not met for a long time run into each other:

'What are you doing?'
'I am working in the city hall.'
'And your wife, how is she?'
'She is working in a paper store.'
'And your daughter?'
'She is working in a plant.'

‘How the hell do you live?’
‘Thank God, my son is unemployed!’[21]

The General Government was therefore swept by a wave of absenteeism. Max Schindler, the head of the Armaments Inspectorate, estimated in 1942 that a quarter of workers were missing on any given day with the figure rising to as much as 70 per cent in some factories in the summer. This had two basic causes: workers needed the time to seek out food and other essentials on the black market; they also sold or bartered goods themselves as a means of funding their food purchases. For example, all but 80 out of 2,000 black market traders arrested in Warsaw in July 1941 had jobs in the official economy. The goods in which they traded were typically purloined from their factories. As Wyka put it, ‘the worker stole and had to steal’. He recorded one incident where the staff of a cigarette factory in Kraków were subjected to an unannounced inspection: ‘the entire courtyard turned white in an instant with discarded cigarette cartons. There was no one to punish since everyone was guilty.’[22]

Absenteeism and theft were compounded by that fact that many workers were exhausted from the daily struggle for food. In the spring of 1943, Max Schindler estimated that armaments workers were capable of only 40 per cent of their natural productivity. This was a serious problem at a time when an increasing number of weapons plants were being relocated to the GG due to the bombing of Germany. Schindler correctly attributed the difficulties to the inadequate rations and wages, noting that each factory had no choice but to allow its workers two days a week off to find food for their families. Indeed, this practice was reluctantly tolerated by the administration – as early as

October 1941 Frank was noting that absenteeism could not be stopped without reasonable rations.[23]

Many factories attempted to improve the situation by providing additional food or benefits in kind, as in the Ursus armaments plant in Warsaw which supplemented low wages with relatively generous allowances of food and coal. However, to provide this extra food the Germans themselves had to buy on the black market, as in May 1943 when Schindler ordered all armaments factories to purchase food. One group of Germans was thus illegally paying extortionate prices for food, and further fuelling black market inflation for ordinary workers, to compensate for the food that another group of Germans had taken out of the country. This reflected conflicting priorities which had never been resolved by the supposed change of course in the first winter of the war. Frank himself recognized this in a speech to Nazi leaders in the GG in December 1942 when he highlighted the tension between the increasingly urgent need to develop industry in Germany's interests in Poland and the continuing demands of the Reich:

> one *suddenly gains the insight* that one cannot simultaneously annihilate the Poles and on the other hand make calculations including the labour capacity of the Poles.
>
> [...] Should we exterminate or construct, should the work be created here or in the Reich, should we hand over the workers or keep them here, should we let the Poles starve or feed them?

In reality, the regime tried to do all of these things at once, although it proved rather more adept at starving than feeding.[24]

As Frank's comments also suggested, labour deportations to the Reich had resurfaced as a major issue.[25] Although they had declined markedly in the second half of 1940, the preparations for Barbarossa had led Göring to order maximum exploitation of foreign labour. The pressure increased when it became clear that the war would be longer than expected, culminating in Hitler's appointment of Fritz Sauckel as Plenipotentiary for Labour Deployment in March 1942. Sauckel proceeded in May 1942 to order the delivery of 100,000 workers in just two months, the first in a series of escalating demands which led to a massive increase in the number of Poles sent to the Reich. As in 1940, the Germans spoke of voluntary recruitment but this mostly remained a fiction given the widespread perception, noted by Wyka, that 'the worst work in the Generalgouvernement is better than going to the Reich'.[26] This was hardly surprising in the light of reports, seized on by underground propaganda, concerning the abysmal conditions faced by Polish workers in Germany. This was not merely a question of the low wages and long hours that might have been expected; the Nazi fear of racial pollution had also led to the creation of a package of discriminatory laws known as the *Polnerlasse* in early 1940. The most public and humiliating provision was the introduction of a special badge for all Polish workers who thus became the first inhabitants of Germany to be so marked, a full 18 months before German Jews. They were additionally subjected to a curfew and banned from public transport, bars and restaurants. From mid-1940 onwards, hundreds were executed and thousands more brought before the courts for having sex with German women (the latter were sent to camps). Many localities introduced their own regulations, such as bans on bicycles and restricted

shopping hours along with the use of ‘labour education camps’ for supposed malefactors.[27]

Frank’s regime therefore relied on force to find workers even though it was well aware that this undermined the GG’s political and economic stability. As Bühler noted in May 1942, coercion would lead to workers not turning up to the factories for fear of abduction whilst random seizures in the streets would endanger security. Frank frequently argued that the most effective method would be to improve conditions in the Reich, as in December 1942 when he claimed that better treatment would have increased recruitment by 50 per cent – after all, the Poles had proven that they could work even though they were ‘naturally not the highest quality material’.[28] However, Hitler sided with Sauckel so coercion prevailed. Local officials – police, labour offices, Kreishauptleute – increasingly resorted to random seizures, notoriously taking people from cinemas and even factories. In November 1942, police in Gorlice in the Kraków district simply seized all students from the town’s technical school.[29] From 1942, the raids increasingly targeted the countryside, to such an extent that peasants sent children or elderly relatives to deliver the food quotas so as to avoid the risk of abduction. As this suggests, people went to great lengths to evade the Germans. Bribery of corrupt labour officials was common whilst others paid ‘professional escapers’ who would report for transport only to later abscond from the trains. Chaim Kaplan noted in May 1940 one imaginative tactic (before the ghetto rendered it impossible): ‘many Poles adorn themselves with the “Ribbon of Disgrace” [the Jewish armband] and masquerade as Jews to make sure of not being seized’.[30]

Despite such measures, more than 1 million inhabitants of the GG were sent to the Reich (some estimates put the

figure as high as 1.5 million), not including the hundreds of thousands of POWs and concentration camp inmates. More than 200,000 were Ukrainians, a higher proportion of whom than of Poles may have gone voluntarily. Nonetheless, it was evident to all concerned that this was hardly the shining example of 'participation and cooperation' praised by Frank when he handed over the gold watch. One of the clearest indications came in late 1941 during a short-lived attempt to make labour in the Reich more enticing by giving workers leave: of 1,338 allowed back to the Warsaw district, only 547 turned up for the return to Germany.[31]

Even within the General Government, Poles were liable to seizure for work. The Baudienst (Construction Service) was a forced labour scheme for young men introduced in 1940. Conscripts were held in barracks under military discipline whilst they toiled in public labour projects for up to seven months with a living allowance of 1 złoty per day. At its peak in early 1944, the service encompassed 45,000 men although many deserted as soon as they could. One conscript recalled a life of 'dirt among insects, in barracks filled with water in autumn and spring' along with constant abuse from the German overseers: 'what is most engraved in my memory is the term *polnische Schweine*'.[32] Members of all age groups were liable to fall prey to the labour duty introduced in October 1939, especially in the countryside where they were deployed on tasks such as road repair, snow clearance and even tending German war graves. In May 1941, in advance of Barbarossa, Klukowski recorded that all men in Szczebrzeszyn aged 15 to 60, except for doctors, vets and public employees, had been ordered to report to the local airfield for construction work.[33]

Inevitably, however, Jews remained the principal victims of forced labour policy. Although Globocnik's Bełżec network

had been closed by the end of 1940, thousands of Jews continued to work in the other camps of the Lublin district into 1941 and in some cases 1942. The preparations for Barbarossa also led to the creation of a new group of camps, mostly in the Warsaw district, in early 1941 where workers were engaged in water control projects. One of those sent to the most notorious camp – Kampinos, west of Warsaw – in April 1941 was the young Piotrków rabbi Shimon Huberband, who had made his way to Warsaw in early 1940. Inmates were forced to dig in

> muddy, claylike ground. Upon removing the first spade of earth, water would fill the empty hole. Thus, we were constantly sinking in muddy waters while working. People began to vomit and halted their work due to the mud, their general exhaustion, and most of all, due to hunger.

As more workers succumbed, they were buried on a nearby hill. On his return to Warsaw, Huberband summarized his five-week experience as having achieved ‘absolutely nothing’ except ‘fifty-three graves on the hill, fifty men who died in Warsaw, and all the rest physical and emotional invalids for life’. These labour camps were so inefficient that they were closed in the summer of 1941 although the annexation of Galicia led to a new, ultimately more sinister, generation under the aegis of SSPF Katzmann who had, as he later put it, felt compelled to intervene ‘against all the layabouts and idlers hanging around’.[34]

In the meantime, however, the dissolution of the camps in the Warsaw district was symptomatic of a significant change in German policy towards Jewish labour, which arose primarily as a result of a catastrophe engulfing many of the

growing number of ghettos. The fact that ghettos were created on an ad hoc basis meant that the regime had no clear strategy towards them, especially as they were envisaged as purely temporary phenomena. However, in line with their racist assumptions, many officials believed that hidden Jewish riches would support the population: that is, the ghettos would sustain themselves by surrendering their resources in return for food (whilst also providing the Germans with a slave labour force). Given that almost all Jews were already impoverished after more than a year of robbery and exploitation, the results were predictable. 'We are without money, without provisions, without hope of getting any appropriate job', lamented Halina Nelken within days of the creation of the Kraków ghetto in March 1941.[35]

The situation was at its worst in Warsaw, both because of the influx of refugees from the smaller ghettos in early 1941 and because German officials eliminated virtually all food supplies in the winter of 1940–1 in the hope of extracting non-existent hidden wealth whilst decimating the population.[36] 'The number of the dead in Warsaw is growing from day to day', noted Emanuel Ringelblum on 18 March 1941. The monthly death rate, which had stood at 898 in January 1941, climbed to a peak of 5,560 by August. Wacław Śledziński, a Polish journalist, described the ghetto in April 1941 as 'a living cemetery'.[37] This was of less concern to the Germans than fear that the ghetto would become an unsustainable drain, consuming more than it produced. A group led by the GG's economics chief Emmerich therefore argued for a more efficient form of exploitation through the establishment of productive enterprises within the walls. Despite opposition from the Warsaw authorities, Frank eventually sided with this position, especially since it was

expected only to be temporary in view of the planned deportations to the USSR.

From May 1941, therefore, the regime permitted the creation of workshops in Warsaw which would pay for increased food supplies. The issue was made more urgent later in the year when the murder of Soviet POWs deprived the Reich of anticipated labour supplies. Although progress was slow, by early 1942 Warsaw and most other large ghettos were increasingly being put to work.[38] Warsaw's monthly death rate – which had remained high through the autumn and winter – fell below 4,000 for the first time in a year in May 1942.[39] However, the emergence of productive ghettos brought its own threats since not everyone, particularly young children and the elderly, could be put to work. In the autumn of 1941, by which time it was clear that the planned deportations would be postponed, officials were increasingly expressing the opinion that the non-working ghetto population was an unacceptable burden which would have to be removed. In the meantime, whilst the workers were just able to subsist, other ghetto residents sank still lower. Halina Nelken noted in early 1942 the increasing practice of borrowing or even stealing the labour cards of others in order to earn a little extra to survive.[40] German policy thus created a typical GG paradox: Jews, who were seen as a transient phenomenon, had every incentive to work; Poles, whose labour was essential, had every incentive not to.

The ghettos were the sites of the most extreme manifestations of a phenomenon which affected the whole General Government – what has been termed destratification, the levelling of traditional social distinctions.[41] Although a small minority of people gained in

wealth during the occupation, members of traditionally high-status groups were amongst the worst affected by the drastic decline in living conditions. In the daily struggle for survival, factors such as education or reputation counted for less than the guile and resourcefulness needed to succeed in the excluded economy. The intelligentsia – intellectuals, artists, professionals – were generally worst affected. Not only were they the principal targets of German terror; many found themselves immediately deprived of their livelihood. This was not true for everyone: some professionals – notably doctors and pharmacists – rarely lacked work. However, secondary school teachers, academics, journalists and writers, amongst others, found themselves unable to legally practice their professions. The situation did improve somewhat from around 1942 as the mobilization of German officials into the Wehrmacht created more opportunities for positions within the administration whilst others found paid work in the organs of the underground or in welfare organizations. Nonetheless, many could only survive through abandoning their customary occupations.[42]

Many professionals initially responded by selling or bartering their possessions in order to acquire food. As Wacław Śledziński noted in February 1940, ‘Warsaw has become one enormous mart for second-hand stuff’. One could find ‘clothes, dresses, linen, fur coats, table utensils, pillows, boots, jewellery, books, or foodstuffs’ at cheap prices since ‘there is mad competition to sell, and buyers are few’. However, this could never be a long-term solution. In time, therefore, some intellectuals, like a great many other people, shifted to trading in goods for which there was demand. Czesław Miłosz, for example, sold British cigarettes and whisky (German booty from Dunkirk, which inevitably found its way onto the black market) ‘as well as less elegant

articles like blood sausage and ladies' underwear'. There thus developed one of the GG's most characteristic sights – the illegal street market. Despite frequent police raids, traders could be found in even the most high-profile locations, such as Adolf-Hitler-Platz in the heart of Kraków. Gęsia, one of the main streets in the Warsaw ghetto, became 'a gigantic bazaar' which, according to Ringelblum, even attracted Gentiles who smuggled themselves into the ghetto.[43]

However, not everyone found themselves suited to such work. When Michał Berg, a Jewish publisher from Warsaw, 'bought anything, prices instantly sank, when I sold, prices doubled the next day'. Many members of the intelligentsia, inexperienced in the ways of this most unregulated of free markets, took whatever work they could. Visiting Warsaw in September 1941, Klukowski was shocked to find that Włodzimierz Antoniewicz, the rector of the city's university, was working in a boiler room; the artist Tadeusz Cieslewski was a waiter. The latter was far from unusual. As early as November 1939, Klukowski had recorded the opening of cafes and restaurants in Szczebrzeszyn by people desperate to gain a secure income. Three months later, in rather more cosmopolitan Warsaw, Śledziński claimed that such institutions were 'springing up everywhere like mushrooms after rain'. Waiters included 'the best film and stage actors' and his former journalistic colleagues. Cafes even developed in the larger ghettos, especially Warsaw. In April 1941, the month the ghetto's death rate passed 2,000 for the first time, Miriam Wattenberg noted the opening of a new cafe whose waitresses were 'ladies of the best society' and which featured performances from well-known artists, including 'the virtuoso' Władysław Szpilman.[44]

The cafes showed that there were winners as well as losers in the excluded economy. Szpilman recalled the customers ‘dripping with diamonds’ who drank and gossiped whilst burly doormen beat away beggars outside. ‘Everything your heart desires can be had there’, wrote Miriam Wattenberg in July 1941 of one cafe: ‘expensive liqueurs, cognac, pickled fish, canned food, duck, chicken, and goose’. The clients were the ghetto’s new rich, or as Miriam put it, ‘the most important smugglers and their mistresses’. Whilst most black marketeers, inside and outside the ghettos, were the likes of street traders or child smugglers, there were also what Szpilman termed ‘magnates’, some with links to the prewar criminal underworld, who relied on large-scale bribery of the authorities. As children carrying small sacks of potatoes were beaten by the police, corrupt guards opened the ghetto gates to convoys of carts ‘carrying food, expensive liquor, the most luxurious of delicacies, tobacco straight from Greece, French fancy goods and cosmetics’. The major smugglers were also linked to one of the few semi-legal businesses which prospered, the rickshaws, or ‘bicycle taxis’, which became one of the most distinctive symbols of the Warsaw streets in both the ghetto and the ‘Aryan’ city.[45]

There were other social groups who saw some gains, at least initially. The Aryanization of Jewish businesses created opportunities for sections of the Polish middle classes. Although the Germans took over large enterprises, especially in the retail sector, and many Jewish businesses were simply liquidated, there were Poles and Ukrainians who gained the chance to acquire stores or artisans’ workshops. ‘To the Germans went the guilt and the crime,’ explained Kazimierz Wyka; ‘to us the keys and the cashbox.’ However, many Poles eventually found their own businesses under

threat, especially when the authorities launched a ‘rationalization’ programme in 1942–3 which brought the closure or merger of many smaller enterprises.[46]

A similar arc was traced in the countryside. Long-term Nazi plans envisaged the eventual dispossession of small farms, with consolidation into large estates controlled by German settlers and the former owners reduced to a class of landless labourers,[47] yet peasants saw some benefits in the early years of the occupation. The black market brought escalating food prices, which enabled them both to accumulate profits which could be reinvested in their farms and to keep more food for their own consumption. Furthermore, debts to Jewish creditors were cancelled whilst some farmers were simultaneously able to acquire Jewish property. Even the modest German efforts in modernizing agriculture and infrastructure brought improvements, although it is likely that unofficial trade with German forces settled in the countryside was of greater benefit. Wyka went so far as to claim that, in economic terms, ‘the peasant did better for himself than during the entire two decades between the wars’. However, although the terms of trade between the countryside and the cities remained firmly in the former’s favour, gains were increasingly undercut not just by the food quotas but also by labour conscription to the Reich and within the GG. As Wyka explained, it was thus the wealthier peasant who ‘gained most from the price rise’ since his ‘stash of cash and supplies gave him an excellent chance to reduce the risks of being “caught” by the authorities’, whether for food or for labour.[48]

In general, therefore, such people were increasingly exceptions to the impoverishment which afflicted the majority of the population, who found the purchase of even the most basic items – not just food – an ever greater

struggle. One of the most telling examples was clothing. Although the new rich flaunted their wealth, as in the case of women chastised by Ringelblum for promenading through the ghetto in expensive boots, most had to make do and mend. Śledziński found Warsaw 'ill-clad and miserable-looking' in late 1941, attired in 'wooden-soled boots' and 'coats, suits and dresses made of paper'. Recycling was the norm. Maria Brzeska recorded silk blouses made from the lining of men's suits whilst 'ragged jumpers, unravelled again and again, are transformed into stockings, gloves, caps, of necessity marvellously coloured'. Jews, meanwhile, were forced to surrender all of their furs at the end of 1941.[49]

Another pressing concern was accommodation, especially in those cities such as Warsaw where thousands of apartments had been destroyed during the September campaign. The situation was made worse not only by the influx of deportees but also by the eviction of Poles to make way for Germans. In Kraków, which naturally had an especially heavy concentration of Germans, around 12,000 Poles were pushed out of the north and west of the city, a reflection of largely unrealized longer-term plans to create predominantly German cities. 'All desire to possess a decent home is killed', wrote Brzeska; 'The worse the home looks, the more certain one can feel in it.' As strains on the housing stock increased, landlords raised rents in their own attempt to keep their heads above water whilst skyrocketing coal prices on the black market meant that many had no adequate heating. Naturally, the housing situation was at its worst in the ghettos, which were almost uniformly catastrophically overcrowded. In addition, they were invariably located in the poorest areas of towns, as in Kraków, where the ghetto was not in the traditional Jewish

quarter of Kazimierz but the working-class suburb of Podgórze. Halina Nelken complained in May 1941 of cockroaches ‘crawling around the dirty basement rooms of the wretched Aryans into which the equally wretched Jews have now moved’.[50]

It is hardly surprising that epidemics increased in such circumstances, a risk compounded by hunger, shortages of medicines, and German seizures of hospitals. Maintaining cleanliness was also a struggle. ‘Wherever you go,’ wrote Ringelblum in May 1942, ‘on the steps of houses, in courtyards, and in the streets, you come across traces of snot.’ The Germans did carry out a mass vaccination against typhoid in Warsaw in the winter of 1939–40 but cases of other illnesses increased dramatically. Jews were the worst affected owing to the acute overcrowding brought by ghettoization. Typhus was – with starvation – the major cause of the accelerating death rate in the Warsaw ghetto in 1941, and other communities were similarly affected. When the disease erupted in the Lublin ghetto in the same year, it rapidly spiralled out of control. With inadequate hospital spaces, the Germans ordered the quarantining of infected houses, a measure which eventually encompassed around half the buildings in the ghetto. At times there were more cordoned-off buildings than the Judenrat had people to guard them, with the result that isolation measures could not be policed.[51]

The common German response to typhus – in Lublin, Warsaw, even Szczebrzeszyn – was then to order disinfection: residents of affected buildings were required to bathe in special showers and have their hair shaved whilst their clothes, bedding and other possessions were fumigated. This process proved to be both an excruciating torment for the affected Jews and a shambolic farce as a

public health measure. Tests by scientists in the Warsaw ghetto found that the disinfectants failed to kill the lice, meaning that congregating people in the baths actually spread the disease. As whole streets were cordoned off, thousands could be left freezing for hours whilst they waited. When Krochmalna, one of the poorest streets of the Warsaw ghetto, was sealed off in August 1941, more than 15,000 people were forced out of their homes. Some 800 of them could not be bathed on the first day so were held overnight without food or warm clothing: when soup finally arrived at 4 a.m., it 'was literally received in caps, towels, handkerchiefs, the laps of jackets and coats, and even in one's hands' since there were insufficient plates. Furthermore, the vacated apartments became magnets for thieves whilst the disinfection process often destroyed clothes and other essential items. Residents therefore went to great lengths to avoid delousing, with the wealthier able to bribe the notoriously corrupt Polish and Jewish officials who oversaw the process to stay away. When an unfortunate inhabitant of Ringelblum's building came down with disease, the other occupants

> took all the invalid's identification papers away from him, put him in a rickshaw, and bought off a Polish policeman. The patient pretended to be unconscious. He died in the hospital, and the house avoided disinfection.

As the disease spread, Miriam Wattenberg noted in September 1941 that 'the bacilli do not recognize racial laws or the borders of the ghetto'. However, as she astutely observed, 'even this fact is exploited by the Nazis for their

anti-Jewish propaganda; they now say that the Jews spread infectious diseases'.[52]

Those most liable to succumb to disease and starvation were Jewish refugees. Although the Polish deportees from the incorporated territories arrived in similarly desperate straits, they were often favoured by the Nazis in the General Government. The same racist logic that saw these people as unfit to live in the Warthegau also regarded them as superior to the Poles of the GG since western Poland had been subjected to German cultural influence in the nineteenth century. Some German planners envisaged the evacuees as the basis of the embryonic Polish middle class which they sought to foster.[53] By contrast, Jewish deportees found themselves, in the words of Oscar Pinkus in Łosice, in 'the ghetto's two lowest social classes: the dying and the starving'. The situation was particularly acute in Warsaw due to the influxes from the incorporated territories and the liquidated ghettos to the west of the city. The Judenrat put them up in shelters but the overcrowded and inadequately heated buildings proved to be of limited comfort. A report from one centre in early 1942 lamented that 'the Refugee *Township* may too soon become a Refugee *hamlet*'. The fate of the many refugees who could not find a place even in these centres was vividly described by Wattenberg:

> During the first few days after their arrival they look for work. At night they sleep in the doorways, that is to say, in the street. When they become exhausted and their swollen feet refuse to carry them, they sit down on the edge of the sidewalk against a wall. They close their eyes and timidly stretch out a begging hand for the first time. After a few days they ask for charity with their eyes open. When hunger torments them

> even more fiercely, they begin to cry and the so-called ‘rabid beggar’ develops.[54]

Begging became a ubiquitous feature of ghetto life. As the numbers multiplied – Ringelblum noted ‘whole families’ including ‘well-dressed people’ in August 1941 – sympathy declined. As early as January 1941, Chaim Kaplan claimed that ‘the number of panhandlers has hardened our hearts’. In November, both Wattenberg and Ringelblum recorded the growing numbers of frozen corpses, especially those of children, found each morning. On the ‘Aryan side’ too, begging became an increasing phenomenon. Wacław Śledziński encountered a growing number of ‘acquaintances and former colleagues’ on the Warsaw streets in December 1941. As in the ghettos, it was the plight of child beggars which most impressed itself on popular consciousness. In January 1942 the police arrested 96 of them in Warsaw. The 49 Jewish children were sent to the ghetto, where they were mostly taken in by Janusz Korczak’s legendary orphanage. The investigations of the welfare activists who looked after the 47 Poles revealed much about life in the GG: 39 children had symptoms of tuberculosis whilst almost all suffered from scabies, ringworm and dental caries. All came from families which lacked a stable parental income due to a sad litany of factors almost entirely caused by the occupation: death, labour conscription, incarceration in Auschwitz, unemployment, disability and abandonment.[55]

These were extreme cases, of course, but many families were afflicted in similar ways. Fathers especially were often absent – as POWs but also as those more likely to fall victim to arrest, deportation or forced labour – creating a significant gender imbalance which was especially acute in the ghettos. This was enhanced by the fact that Jewish men

had been more likely than women to flee in 1939, on the widespread assumption that only the former would be targeted. In the Warsaw ghetto in early 1942, there were 132 women to every 100 men. Even where both parents were present, they often struggled to support their children. The spread of child smugglers or street traders was thus symptomatic of a wider trend in which many children found themselves as earners, sometimes the principal earner, and even – for teenagers especially – as heads of families.[56]

Many children, especially Jews, were also liable to forced labour. One was Halina Nelken's cousin Mietek, 'a frail child of fourteen', who returned to the Kraków ghetto each day 'tattered and humiliated, his face swollen and dirty, wearily dragging his feet along the same city streets on which, nicely dressed, he once promenaded with his parents or ran to school'. One day, when Halina herself was returning from forced labour on a German airfield, she carried a bunch of cornflowers into the ghetto, much to the amazement of a group of small children. The conversation turned to fields and cows, the latter a source of mystery to two-year-old Irenka:

> 'Please tell me,' whispered a little voice, '*there*, where those cows and fields are, is *there* like here?' Irenka pointed to the confined and littered courtyard.
>
> 'Oh no! Of course not!'
>
> 'So what is *there*?'

The loss of childhood experienced by Mietek and Irenka could be manifested in many ways. One of the most drastic was exposure to death at a desperately early age. In May 1941, Ringelblum observed that children 'no longer afraid of death [...] played a game of tickling a corpse'. Maria Brzeska

recorded the words of a four-year-old Polish boy whose father had died in Auschwitz: ‘Don’t cry, mummy; daddy’s dead now, but he’ll come back to us after the war.’[57]

The widespread concern for children’s welfare expressed in almost all accounts of the period was reflected in immense efforts to ameliorate their situation such as improvised playgrounds in Warsaw ghetto courtyards or ‘holidays in gardens’ for Polish children.[58] Education was naturally a principal concern. Although Ukrainian secondary schools were permitted, and indeed expanded compared to the prewar period, the closure of Polish institutions remained in force. Vocational schools were allowed for Poles but the fact that these had higher enrolment than before the war was primarily a reflection of the lack of legal alternatives. Elementary education continued but was subject to severe practical constraints. Many school buildings had been destroyed during the September campaign whilst others were requisitioned, imposing what a report of the government-in-exile termed ‘a nomadic life’ on several schools. Together with the targeting of teachers in terror actions, this led to a dramatic decline in the number of schools. In Warsaw, for example, only 175 of 380 prewar elementary schools were still functioning in 1941, and they were subject to frequent closures due to shortages of fuel. Class sizes multiplied, reaching up to 80 children in some cases. At the same time, the number of students declined: in Warsaw 85,000 were attending school in 1941 compared to 140,000 in 1938. In particular, it seems that many working-class parents stopped sending their children to school because of the need for them to work in the black economy, lack of clothing and, for the oldest, fear of labour round-ups. In the classroom itself, subjects such as history and geography were forbidden whilst all textbooks were

confiscated in 1939. Schools were only allowed to use prescribed works such as Hans Christian Andersen's fairy tales or nature books.[59]

The situation was even more acute for Jewish children, for whom all education had effectively been banned in 1939. The Germans did permit the opening of some vocational institutions in 1940 but it was only in September 1941 that Adam Czerniaków, the chair of the Warsaw Judenrat, was able to secure consent for the opening of elementary schools in the ghetto. By June 1942, 6,700 children were enrolled, a fraction of the more than 48,000 in the appropriate age groups. Most Jewish communities lacked any legal schools. In Lublin, for example, permission was initially granted but then revoked with the creation of the ghetto in March 1941 on the ground that there was no suitable building.[60]

It was in these circumstances that extensive Polish and Jewish clandestine schooling networks emerged which offered both an education to children and a means of support to unemployed secondary teachers and intellectuals. Although exact figures are lacking since much of the documentation relating to Warsaw, the centre of the movement, was destroyed during the 1944 uprising, it has been estimated that around 50,000 Polish teenagers received illicit secondary education. One of the best-recorded examples was Nowy Sącz Kreis in the Kraków district, where 68 teachers were providing classes in 23 communities by early 1941. Students across the GG were even secretly able to take exams organized by the educational arms of the underground state. There was also illegal higher education, primarily in Warsaw where staff of the university continued courses. The city additionally became the base from 1940 of the University of the Western

Lands which encompassed academics and students deported from Poznań. Several thousand students – together with smaller numbers in Kraków, Lublin and Lwów – were thus able to gain diplomas or degrees, under fictitious guises such as apparently anodyne letters from relatives, which were to be redeemed once independence was regained.[61]

In the Warsaw ghetto, around 9,600 elementary-school-age children attended clandestine schools whilst a similar number were educated at home. Underground secondary schools were also established in some ghettos. Great ingenuity was shown by teachers such as Chaim Zelmanowski, who made use of the vegetable patches in Warsaw to study biology. Tadeusz Pankiewicz, a Polish pharmacist who was the only 'Aryan' permitted to live within the Kraków ghetto, recalled secret classes in Judaica whilst other students 'took music, drawing and painting lessons outside of the Ghetto, as long as it was possible to leave it with a pass'. Attempts were made to cater to younger children in the Warsaw ghetto through day care centres and so-called 'children's corners', rooms set aside in tenements for play and study.[62]

Clandestine educators faced a constant struggle, not least in the form of the threat to their lives. In Nowy Sącz Kreis, around 20 teachers were arrested and shot or sent to camps in 1941 alone. The same lack of resources that afflicted the legal schools was a recurring problem. A report on a Warsaw ghetto playroom on December 1941 highlighted the battle to secure tables, benches and even window panes, with the result that 'we can do nothing with the children, because it is too cold'. Another, better resourced, playroom had deeper problems. The children 'sing songs and play rabbits', whilst telling stories enabled

them ‘to get rid of the fear that penetrated their souls’; however, they were dressed in ‘underwear not washed for months’ and afflicted by scabies. Many were absent: 15 were ill, 15 had ‘no clothes at all’, four were working. In the provinces, even before ghettoization, the teenage Oscar Pinkus lacked books, teachers and, ‘worst of all’, time. Only when he avoided forced labour by securing a job in a Wehrmacht laundry was Oscar able to study. Even then, ‘I had to rise at five to give myself a couple of free hours’.[63]

Other forms of social care were permitted, even encouraged, by Frank’s regime given its complete inability to feed its subjects. Indeed, welfare organizations were the only legal civil society groups in the General Government. In early 1940, Frank authorized the creation of the Central Welfare Council (NRO), an umbrella organization encompassing the Main Welfare Council (RGO) for Poles, the Jewish Social Self-Help (ŻSS) and the Ukrainian UTsK. These groups received funding – inadequate, of course – from the administration but also relied on donations and charitable institutions in the respective diasporas, although deteriorating relations with the USA in 1941 largely eliminated these latter sources. Many existing welfare organizations were in practice incorporated into the structures of the NRO members, but independent initiatives also flourished, especially in Warsaw. Amongst them were House Committees in Jewish Warsaw which had developed during the siege around the courtyards which characterized the city’s buildings. Wealthier tenants were encouraged to feed the poorer whilst the committees oversaw the children’s corners and cultural activities. Although legally under the auspices of the ŻSS, the committees were fundamentally a grassroots phenomenon, what their leading activist Michał Mazor termed ‘emphatically a national

institution of the Ghetto, an emanation from the masses'. Ghettoization and the consequent decline in social solidarity meant that their resources and importance ebbed over the course of 1941, yet they remained a striking embodiment of the social activism of many inhabitants of the GG.[64]

The most important role of the various self-help organizations was the provision of food in the form of the soup kitchens which arose in all significant cities. Some were free – as in Częstochowa for both Poles and Jews – although most increasingly charged small fees. Some catered for different groups, such as intellectuals, refugees and children, offering essential nutrition for hundreds of thousands. In Warsaw alone, the RGO (through the Capital Social Self-Help Committee, which had been established by Mayor Starzyński during the invasion) provided 133,383 meals daily to Poles in May 1941 whilst Jewish kitchens distributed a similar number in the ghetto. However, as black market prices rose and German support was reduced, numbers steadily declined. In June 1944, by which time there were no Jews legally left to feed, 70,466 Varsovians were receiving these meals. The food itself naturally also left something to be desired, as in the 'Kitchen for the Intellectuals' in the Kraków ghetto, whose 'pompous name', wrote Halina Nelken, could not hide food which was 'certainly worse than it was before the war at the Brothers Albert shelter for the homeless'.[65]

Nonetheless, the welfare organizations did their best through an enormously diverse range of activities including the provision of clothing (67,188 pairs of shoes were distributed in Warsaw), medicines, money and support for the families of POWs. Karolina Lanckorońska was even able to oversee, on behalf of the RGO, the feeding of political prisoners until her work took her to Galicia, where she was

arrested by Hans Krüger and eventually deported to Ravensbrück.[66]

Self-help initiatives were one manifestation of what has been termed ‘spiritual resistance’, an assertion of human dignity in fundamentally inhuman conditions. This phenomenon could take many forms. For some, such as Klukowski or Śledziński, it involved recording life under the occupation. Inevitably, such chroniclers were principally drawn from the urban intelligentsia yet there were various attempts to document as many experiences as possible. The most ambitious undertaking was the *Oneg Shabbat* project initiated by Emanuel Ringelblum. He and a dedicated band of activists sought to record all aspects of life in Jewish Warsaw, and Poland generally, by collecting diaries, newspapers, statistical reports, poems, drawings and such mundane artefacts as chocolate wrappers and tram tickets. The archives were buried in metal boxes and milk churns in 1942–3; most, but not all, were discovered after the war, at least partially fulfilling the last testament of David Graber, a 19-year-old activist who helped to bury the first cache in August 1942:

> May the treasure fall in good hands, may it last into better times, may it alarm and alert the world to what happened and was played out in the twentieth century. […] We may now die in peace. We fulfilled our mission. May history attest for us.[67]

One of the many developments recorded by *Oneg Shabbat* was the flourishing of illicit cultural activity. The most pervasive form of this was an underground press without parallel in occupied Europe. At least 1,246 separate

periodicals were published in Poland during the war, 90 per cent of them in the General Government and more than half in Warsaw. Most were of necessity small and short-lived. Nonetheless, more than 200 survived for more than two years, an impressive achievement given the acute problems faced by illegal publishers. The site of Śledziński's press in early 1940, for example, had 'no daylight, no electric light, and no water', to ensure security. Rationed paper could only be easily acquired through stealing from or bribing Germans whilst distribution required a network of trusted couriers. In these circumstances, the sheer diversity of the underground publications was astounding, almost resembling that of a free press with titles targeted at specific groups, such as intellectuals, children, railway workers, and so on. Although the circulation of many titles was probably modest, the most popular – especially *Biuletyn Informacyjny*, the principal organ of the underground – sold tens of thousands of copies, which often had multiple readers.[68]

Although Jan Karski may have been exaggerating when he claimed that there 'was no underground paper which did not contain some poetry', the illegal publishers did support serious literature. There were around 40 literary and satirical papers whilst one of the great successes of the underground market was an anthology of poetry, entitled *The Invincible Song* (*Pieśń niepodległa*), which was edited by Miłosz and published in 1942. Numerous accounts attested to the hunger for reading material during the occupation. The Nazis naturally closed many bookshops and restricted what could legally be published primarily to housekeeping manuals, although their titles did at least show some understanding of the reality of life in the GG: *One Hundred Potato Dishes*, *How to Make Soap*, *Vermin in the Larder*, and so on. Nonetheless, street traders and underground libraries

catered to wartime readers, who were particularly drawn to classic historical literature such as Dumas or the Polish Nobel Laureate, Henryk Sienkiewicz. In June 1942, Ringelblum noted the popularity of Lloyd George's war memoirs and *War and Peace*: 'being unable to take revenge on the enemy in reality, we are seeking it in fantasy'.[69]

Literature was performed, too, reflecting the role it had long played in Polish history as a means of sustaining morale and preserving national culture. Not only were small underground theatres and illegal literary salons convened; some writers, notably Władysław Szlengel in the Warsaw ghetto, performed in workshops and soup kitchens with poems then passed on by word of mouth. However, the main venues – for poetry, plays and music – were the cafes, which increasingly served as ersatz cultural centres. In the ghetto's Sztuka (Art) cafe, Szlengel organized an ongoing satirical cabaret entitled 'Live News' in early 1942 which poked fun at the struggles of daily life. There were also theatres in the Warsaw ghetto, performing in Polish and Yiddish, a symphony orchestra and several string quartets. Critics argued that most of the content was overly sentimental, yet comment on the reality of the ghetto was possible, as in Jerzy Jurandot's play *Love Looks for an Apartment*, a love-swapping comedy about two couples forced to share their accommodation. Miriam Wattenberg noted that the play brought both hearty laughs of recognition and a welcome distraction from 'the dangers that lurk outside'. Miriam was amongst a group of teenagers whose artwork was shown at a well-attended exhibition in September 1941: 'Most popular are the still lifes. The spectators feast their eyes on the apples, carrots, and other foodstuffs so realistically painted. Less successful are our drawings of beggars.'[70]

In some senses, the large ghettos actually had more cultural freedom than the 'Aryan side' since the Germans were less worried about what happened within their walls. Naturally, a principal concern of the regime was the promotion of German culture, and thereby of Frank's Renaissance prince self-image. Kraków's Słowacki Theatre (named after one of Poland's greatest poets) became the State Theatre of the General Government, performing an almost entirely German repertoire. Provincial theatres were similarly requisitioned. One of Frank's proudest achievements was the establishment of the GG's own symphony orchestra in Kraków although he struggled to attract the talent he hoped for – Richard Strauss rejected requests to come to Poland, compensating Frank by sending an excruciating poem comparing the Governor General to Lohengrin in January 1944. As an account of the government-in-exile explained, the GG was closer to 'some backwater of German provincial life' than the new Florence that Frank envisaged.[71]

The administration produced a wide range of publications for Germans inside and outside the GG, ranging from newspapers such as the weekly *Krakauer Zeitung* to tourist guides, of which the Baedeker was only the most prestigious example. The themes were mostly predictable: the German roots of all cultural achievement, the fundamental backwardness of the Poles, the pernicious influence of the Jews and the benevolence of German rule. A typical example of the prevailing attitude was Helmut Gauweiler's *Deutsches Vorfeld im Osten* (1941), a glossy photo album containing pictures of military victories, Frank with smiling Ukrainian peasants, and naked Jews being forced to bathe for 'probably the first time in their lives'. A section entitled 'German barbarians' showed images of reconstruction

projects and market stalls groaning under the weight of foodstuffs. Credulous readers were assured that although Poles were ‘not a creative people’, the Germans would magnanimously preserve ‘their national idiosyncrasy, their customs and traditions’.[72]

Such comments were echoed in guidelines from Frank’s propaganda department which were leaked to the underground in 1940: Polish cultural activity was to be permitted only ‘in so far as it serves the primitive need of amusement and diversion’.[73] The main form of provision was through publications directed at Poles – nicknamed ‘reptile journalism’ by the underground – which consisted of newspapers such as the *Nowy Kurier Warszawski*, professional journals and illustrated magazines. The content chiefly consisted of war news along with themes similar to those of the German press, with a particular emphasis on German generosity, the supposed moral bankruptcy of Poland’s old elites, anti-Semitism and (increasingly) anti-Bolshevism. Despite the transparent mendacity of these messages, and underground calls for a boycott, many titles enjoyed high circulation. This was partly because of the absence of alternatives on the newsstands (although newsboys sometimes surreptitiously slipped in copies of *Biuletyn Informacyjny*) and the desire for news of German defeats. For Jews, the *Gazeta Żydowska* provided the only legal source of information about conditions in other ghettos. Nonetheless, some historians have suggested that the reptile press had an insidious effect on some readers, particularly in encouraging anti-Semitic and anti-leftist stereotypes.[74]

There was similarly ambiguity with the performing arts. German toleration of the cafes reflected the propaganda guidelines which banned ‘serious drama and opera’ for

Poles but allowed operettas, revues and light comedy. Polish troupes were even permitted to use ‘German’ theatres as long as performances took place at different times. Legal theatre thus developed. Although the Komedia in Warsaw was able to stage some serious works, the emphasis was on what the government-in-exile termed ‘circus-cum-music-hall’. The flavour can be gleaned from titles such as ‘Under a fig leaf’, ‘Drunken Walter’ and ‘Drinks and kisses’. As the propaganda department put it, ‘there is no objection to a lowering of the standard or to a flavour of eroticism’. Performers, like journalists, had to be licensed. Governor Fischer reported that 1,356 actors and 1,412 musicians had registered in Warsaw although many of the more prominent refused. The result, according to the government-in-exile, was that ‘performances were given by “artists” from night-clubs, “actresses” who had never seen the inside of a dramatic school, plus one or two professionals’. Nonetheless, the fact that there were 15 theatres plus an operetta for Poles in Warsaw was indicative that there were audiences.[75]

The prevailing form of mass entertainment was cinema. Poles were forbidden to attend screenings for Germans – although Ukrainians were allowed – whilst the number of picture houses was reduced from around 300 to 140, 40 of which were for Germans only. Nonetheless, Poles were offered a diet of newsreels, apolitical prewar films and German productions for the Polish market. War movies (stressing German prowess), adventures and erotica were staples. The underground called for a boycott, both as a rejection of propaganda and a denial of income to the Germans, with the slogan ‘only pigs sit in the cinema’. However, Poles flocked to the movies. In Warsaw, where prewar audiences had numbered more than a million a

month, there were still as many as half a million visits in January 1942, even though only a fifth of the cinemas were still open. Although this was seen as unpatriotic by the underground – in May 1944, *Biuletyn Informacyjny* ranked movie-going as second only to drunkenness amongst the sins of average Poles – it reflected the same desire for escapism that drove Miriam Wattenberg to the Warsaw ghetto theatres. In the backwater of Szczebrzeszyn, Klukowski observed in February 1940 that the cinema was the 'only place that people seem to go'.[76]

The failure of the cinema boycott was indicative that not everyone conformed to the standards of civic behaviour demanded by the underground. After the war a national narrative emerged of a society united in resistance to the occupiers with only a small criminal element lapsing from its duty. This impression was enhanced by the fact that most well-known accounts of life in the GG were written by urban intellectuals, almost all of them linked to resistance groups. However, these same observers were also generally astute and honest enough to recognize the many negative developments which were an inevitable response to life in the most taxing of circumstances. Kazimierz Wyka in particular highlighted the moral ambiguities inherent in the behaviour necessary to survive. Faced with German malevolence, the individual 'believed himself – and rightly so – to be freed of moral participation in this imposed social order'. The result was that 'anything was permitted and one ought to do whatever one wanted. The amorality of work even became a patriotic responsibility.' Or as Czesław Miłosz put it, if 'everything is outside the law, nothing is outside it'. 'What used to be a crime [...], i.e. cheating the government, turned into a merit', agreed Józef Górski, a conservative

landowner who was a world away politically from Wyka and Miłosz. There was thus a ‘collapse of ethical norms’ which ‘could not have failed to bring about a relaxation of morals between individual human beings’.[77]

The underground celebrated and encouraged shirking with the symbol of the tortoise and the initials ‘PPP’ (‘*pracuj Polaku powoli*’ – ‘Pole, work slowly’) plastered on walls. However, writers such as Wyka acknowledged that cheating the Germans was as much a result of necessity as of patriotism and worried about the longer-term effects in the form of a literal demoralization of society. For example, when Klukowski visited Warsaw in September 1941, he was surprised to find that most people did not pay their tram fares and conductors did not collect them, thereby depriving the administration of income. ‘No doubt it is necessary; it’s a duty’, commented Wacław Śledziński on this and similar behaviour. Nonetheless, ‘I cannot but fear for the future. Above all I fear the demoralization of youth by the conditions prevailing under the occupation.’[78]

The eternal concern with the ever deteriorating standards of the young was given sharper focus in the GG. As Śledziński noted, young people were often ‘making the greatest sacrifices’ as members of the underground. Yet *Biuletyn Informacyjny* worried in June 1941 about a self-willed generation which rejected the values and institutions of its elders. Emanuel Ringelblum recorded in May 1942 that girls were stealing from their impoverished parents in the ghetto to buy new jewellery or hairstyles. A common theme in many accounts – both Polish and Jewish – was a decline in feelings of social obligation, and not just amongst the young. Reflecting on his time performing in Cafe Nowoczesna in the ghetto, Szpilman commented: ‘I lost two illusions here: my beliefs in our general solidarity and in the

musicality of the Jews.' A contributory factor was an inevitable moral blunting resulting from the exposure to death and violence. In August 1941 Ringelblum observed that 'death no longer impresses. One walks past corpses with indifference.' Two months later, Śledziński noted that 'news of the death in a concentration camp, or the shooting even of our best friends, scarcely makes an impression on anyone any more'.[79]

It was generally agreed that there was a rise in what were considered anti-social behaviours. This was most notable with drunkenness, a phenomenon against which the underground railed to little effect. Klukowski even surmised that the Germans were encouraging the spread of alcoholism in Szczebrzeszyn. The doctor also noted a growing number of cases of sexually transmitted diseases, including amongst teenagers who had first been victims of sexual violence and then, lacking means of financial support, had turned to prostitution. Some were deportees from the incorporated territories, 'without parents and families'.[80]

The most worrying development for Klukowski was increasing crime, especially the robberies which he recorded from as early as September 1939; by June 1942, they were 'daily events' against which the police were 'completely helpless' to act. Indeed, the Lublin district, together with neighbouring areas of the Warsaw district, appears to have been worst affected by the tide of banditry. The most notorious gang, led by 'Dziadek' ('Grandpa') Stanisław Kiełbasa, was based little more than 20 miles from Szczebrzeszyn. The so-called Kiełbaszowy were armed with machine guns with which they robbed not only manor houses but also the poorest peasants and Jewish escapees –

on at least two occasions, they also murdered Jews hiding in the forests.[81]

The most sensitive question of all was that of relations with the occupiers.[82] Even during the war, it was a source of pride that Poland was a 'land without a Quisling' and this was indeed true in the sense that Nazi policy precluded the state-level collaboration seen in Norway, France or even the Czech lands. The possibility was further limited by the traditionally anti-German disposition of the nationalist right and, increasingly, by the emergence of the underground state which represented both a moral and a physical barrier to cooperation. This is not to say, however, that the potential for collaboration did not exist since Poland, like every other country, had its Nazi sympathizers on the fringes. Indeed, sections of the far-right had attempted to create a proto-Nazi movement before the establishment of the GG in the form of the National Revolutionary Camp; most members were arrested by the Gestapo in early 1940. Similarly, the landowner Józef Górski found much to admire in the Germans: their supposed cleanliness, order, creative powers (he claimed that the horrendous Ernst Gramß had done more for Sokołów than all the local governors of the interwar period) and their anti-Semitism. However, Górski found himself alienated by the 'zoological nationalism' of the Nazis which denied the Poles any say in their own destiny.[83] It was thus German lack of interest, as much as Polish resistance, that prevented the emergence of any quislings.

Nonetheless, some lower-level forms of collaboration did exist, most obviously from elements of the GG's ethnic German community, which numbered some 70,000 people in 1939. Numbers increased to more than 260,000 by 1943 as some Poles of German descent sought the benefits of a

privileged status, not least better rations, which they judged to outweigh the ostracism of their neighbours. Although many applications for Volksdeutsche registration were thus opportunistic, an increasing number played a role in the administration and the police, as the examples of the Selbstschutz and Sonderdienst showed. The same was true of Ukrainian far-right activists who, as already noted, saw the chance to advance their agenda through cooperation. This was naturally most pronounced in Galicia but the south of the Lublin district also saw significant levels of collaboration, as Klukowski lamented when he complained of an influx of Ukrainian officials in September 1940.[84]

However, a minority of Poles and Jews formally collaborated too, an indication that no nationality could claim a monopoly on virtue. Some acted as Gestapo informers, or so-called V-Männer. The most notorious Gestapo collaborator was Abraham Gancwajch who headed a group known as ‘The Thirteen’ (from the address of their HQ at Leszno 13) in the Warsaw ghetto. Believing that German victory was inevitable, Gancwajch worked with the Gestapo to undermine the Judenrat, enrich himself and infiltrate opposition groups under the guise of combating corruption and the black market. As in Germany, the Gestapo also relied on denunciations, which came from all ethnic groups and social classes. Klukowski recorded numerous examples, including the case of one farmer, Jan Wasilik, who informed on his own brother, who was active in the underground. Klukowski himself was denounced in May 1943 as a Communist and a Jew, prompting him to reflect that ‘on the one hand I was amused, particularly about my Jewish origin, but on the other hand I am really upset about the meanness of some people’.[85]

A more widespread phenomenon was fraternization. Unsurprisingly, the ire of the underground was particularly focussed on women, as in October 1940 when *Biuletyn Informacyjny* published the names and addresses of those, including the wives of Polish officers in captivity, who were accused of 'sleeping around'. However, fraternization took on wider forms in the countryside, primarily in the early years of the GG, where the shortage of German personnel forced the occupiers to try to get along with at least elements of the local population. This was reinforced by the initial increase in peasant living standards which led many to welcome German rule before expectations soured. Bolesław Stolarz, a poor peasant in Antolin in the Lublin district who was later active in the Home Army, claimed that he was initially the only villager to openly oppose the Germans: most 'rejoiced over the "magnificent masters" that the Germans were considered to be'.[86]

The traditional leaders of civil society found themselves forced to cooperate in other ways, giving rise to what might be better termed accommodation rather than collaboration.[87] Although the RGO covertly received funds from the government-in-exile and many of its activists, such as Lanckorońska, had links with the underground, it was of necessity obliged to work with the Germans who sometimes treated its leadership, notably Count Adam Ronikier (the RGO's president for most of the occupation), as representatives of Polish society. In the eyes of the London regime and the underground state, Ronikier and his colleagues sometimes overstepped the mark, as in attending German-sponsored events. The church was also criticized. Although the Archbishop of Kraków, Adam Sapieha, was widely admired for his anti-German stance, some of his colleagues proved more accommodating, such

as the Bishop of Sandomierz, Jan Lorek, who urged Poles to report for labour recruitment. At a local level, priests were amongst the members of elites obliged to cooperate as members of the quota committees. For some notables, this was reinforced by a sense of duty to their communities. As Górski explained, 'I wanted every man associated with my estate to feel safe under my wings. [...] This type of obligation required that I be conciliatory with the occupier.'[88]

An especially ambiguous case was that of those who held official positions. At Nuremberg Frank estimated that 280,000 Poles and Ukrainians had been employed by the administration, and this was not including the lower-level wójts and sołtys (respectively commune and village heads – communes oversaw groups of villages). Although they were denied senior posts, Poles vastly outnumbered Germans, especially at the local level. In January 1944, for example, Poles made up at least 717 of the 1,512 mayors and wójts, Ukrainians 463. The situation of many administrators was typified by Bronisław Schatten's friend Tadeusz Słomka, a labour official who 'constantly cursed the fate which doomed him to sit in a Nazi office sending Poles to work in the Reich'. However, most continued to serve for eminently understandable reasons, not least higher rations and exemption from labour conscription. Many officials sought the advice of the underground, such as Julian Kulski, Warsaw's deputy mayor, who only stayed on as Starzyński's successor after securing the consent of the government-in-exile. Office-holding was generally tolerated, except in agencies which were seen as directly detrimental to Polish interests such as the police. Indeed, some administrators used their positions to attempt to mitigate German policies or even as cover for underground work.[89]

However, this was more difficult in rural communities where the wójts and sołtys were required to directly serve German interests, especially in the collection of food quotas and labour conscription. Many were accused of taking bribes from wealthier farmers, meaning that the burdens fell mostly on poorer peasants. However, it should be borne in mind that they were always at risk themselves, with prewar communal leaders increasingly replaced, often by deportees from the incorporated territories. The more zealous Kreishauptleute resorted to intimidation, as in Janów where Hans Lenk threatened in October 1941 to send five sołtys to a labour camp each month unless food deliveries and other exactions were fulfilled. At the same time, they were also increasingly targeted in underground attacks. An even more acute position was occupied by the armed blue police who were frequently condemned in the underground press even though service was compulsory for prewar policemen. Their duties included taking part in searches, combating the black market and, later, fighting partisans. This undoubtedly created dilemmas for some, such as the policeman whose suicide Klukowski recorded in December 1940. What especially concerned the underground was overzealous service. In August 1941, for example, *Biuletyn Informacyjny* condemned officers who searched citizens more vigorously than their German counterparts at checkpoints; the service numbers of such men were often published in the illegal press. Yet there were other cases of policemen who warned the population of German plans or who even occasionally facilitated escapes from prisons.[90]

Such experiences were replicated in an even more extreme form in Jewish communities. The Judenräte, forced to take on functions which had never troubled the prewar *Kehillot* such as healthcare and housing allocation, worked

hard to develop extensive welfare systems and foster cultural life. As their responsibilities grew, they also became an essential source of employment for a growing number of people. Ultimately, however, their primary role was to carry out German orders, particularly in terms of meeting regular financial exactions and providing (and funding) forced labour. In these circumstances, many were subjected to withering criticism. ‘The entire work of the Jewish Council is an evil perpetrated against the poor’, claimed Ringelblum in January 1942. He had in mind the financial policies of the council, mirrored in many other cities, which placed emphasis on indirect taxes as a means of raising revenue to meet the incessant German demands (not least bribery to stave off even harsher measures). A particular source of bitterness was the tactic deployed in many communities of taking money from wealthier Jews to avoid forced labour, leaving Ringelblum to lament in September 1940 that ‘only poor people go to the camps’. When Shimon Huberband was seized for Kampinos in 1941, he found that the 15 other men taken from his courtyard were all able to buy their freedom after paying off the Jewish police.[91]

This incident highlighted the two most commonly expressed complaints against the Judenräte: corruption and the role of the police. Positions in the growing bureaucracy of the councils were much sought since they offered an apparent degree of stability against the threats of starvation, forced labour and, with time, much worse. It was hardly surprising, given the daily struggle for survival, that in some cases this encouraged bribery and cronyism, in both the acquisition of posts and the exploitation of their responsibilities. The same pressures encouraged many young Jewish men to join the police forces, or Order Service (OD), which were created before ghettos in some cities.

Tasks such as policing smuggling and rounding up forced labourers inevitably offered opportunities for enrichment which some could not refuse. Like the blue police, the OD undoubtedly attracted some unsavoury characters such as Symcha Spira, the head of the Kraków ghetto police whom Tadeusz Pankiewicz described as ‘a megalomaniac, wrapped in fantasy, a classic example of a psychopath’. However, most were like Calek Perechodnik who joined the Otwock ghetto police: ‘everyone wanted, above all, to survive the war with his family.’[92]

Most Judenrat leaders, like their Polish counterparts, were ordinary human beings struggling in extraordinary circumstances. Adam Czerniaków in particular was often criticized yet Marceli Reich, his translator, argued that ‘even his opponents would not dispute that, while perhaps a little naive, he was an honest, upright individual, a man of integrity’. Indeed, Czerniaków – who had been appointed to represent the Jewish community by Starzyński during the siege – chose to stay in the city when other community leaders escaped. The Judenräte were always at the mercy of the Germans who frequently delighted in reminding them of the fact. In Lublin, for example, council members were forced to dance barefoot in the snow in January 1942. The septuagenarian Józef Parnas, first chair of the Lwów Judenrat, was shot in autumn 1941, apparently for refusing to nominate forced labourers. As Oscar Pinkus put it, in comments which could have been applied almost anywhere, community leaders in Łosice ‘were not collaborators; they could not have been, even had they wanted that. […] No Judenrat member ever voluntarily added to our misery.’[93] Corrupt or misguided as some may have been, Jewish councils – and Polish officials – were not the ultimate cause

of the misery inflicted on the inhabitants of the General Government.

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6
‘That accursed year’
Aktion Reinhard

‘Balm for the wounds. The street is smiling.’ So wrote Adam Czerniaków on 7 June 1942, the occasion of what the teacher Michał Zylberberg described as ‘the one happy event’ in the history of the Warsaw ghetto: the opening of a children’s playground opposite the Judenrat building on Grzybowska Street. This had been a pet project of Czerniaków’s, funded by the Jewish Council and nurtured through the spring despite dark rumours of imminent deportations and harassment by a German film crew making a propaganda movie in the ghetto. In an open space where two buildings had been bombed in 1939, grass was planted, a fountain installed and murals painted to create what Zylberberg termed ‘a symphony of colour’. Czerniaków organized regular appearances by the band of the Jewish police in the playground, as on 5 July when 600 children performed for him and he invited a small girl dressed as Charlie Chaplin to sit alongside him. The Grzybowska playground was the first of three that Czerniaków planned: the second opened on 12 July with large crowds attending to watch children’s choirs and a ballet; the children gave the Judenrat chair a standing ovation. Not everyone was so

enthusiastic, with critics arguing that such festivities were inappropriate given the shadows lengthening over the ghetto. Nonetheless, Czerniaków believed he was doing his duty: ‘I am reminded of a film: a ship is sinking and the captain, to raise the spirits of the passengers, orders the orchestra to play a jazz piece. I had made up my mind to emulate the captain.’[1]

Czerniaków was not alone. The deep commitment of many to child welfare was most obviously expressed in the ghetto’s annual Month of the Child, in which donations were solicited through extensive advertising and a programme of concerts and other cultural events. Again there was criticism, as in 1941 when Ringelblum noted the fund-raising posters draped over the corpses of frozen street children as a silent protest against the perceived ineffectiveness of the campaign. Nonetheless, 1941’s Month of the Child raised 1 million złotych, proving that at least some spirit of communal solidarity survived. There were other examples. A month before the opening of the playground, Czerniaków had presided over a gala performance by the ghetto’s schoolchildren for the Lag B’Omer holiday at the Femina theatre which Ringelblum found ‘very impressive’. Janusz Korczak, the revered children’s author, educator and advocate who was often critical of Czerniaków, staged Rabindranath Tagore’s play *The Post Office* at his orphanage on 15 July. Korczak’s invitation promised ‘a moving experience of the highest order’ whilst an appended ‘unwritten review’ by Władysław Szlengel suggested it would be the ‘first really artistic performance since 1939’. The play tells the story of a bedridden orphan who fantasizes that he will be visited by the king and dies dreaming of a happier future. Some have

speculated that Korczak was thereby seeking to prepare the children mentally for what was to come.[2]

Czerniaków, meanwhile, also expended great efforts in this period attempting to persuade the Germans to release several hundred children – smugglers and beggars – being held in the ghetto's prison on Gęsia Street. Although Ringelblum noted the irony that imprisonment had done 'wonderful things' for them by giving them the chance to exercise and sing, the prison was overcrowded with 1,650 people crammed into cells intended only for 500. Czerniaków therefore hoped that the children could to be taken into the Judenrat's care. On 20 July he again discussed the matter with Heinz Auerswald, the German commissioner responsible for the ghetto. Auerswald, about to become a father, was presented with a photo album for the child compiled by Tosia Langnas, the girlfriend of Czerniaków's translator Marceli Reich. Apparently touched by the gesture, Auerswald promised to facilitate the children's release on the condition that the Judenrat guaranteed that they would not escape.[3] The promise was never fulfilled.

On 21 July, several members of the Judenrat were arrested, a prelude to the arrival of Hermann Höfle, author of the infamous telegram, at ten o'clock on the following morning. As the children were hastily ushered away from the playground opposite the Judenrat building, Höfle demanded that Czerniaków provide 6,000 people for deportation by four o'clock. This would be the minimum number required each day. According to Reich, the German pointed to the playground and said, 'If not, you'll all be strung up – over there.' When it was made clear to Czerniaków on 23 July that the deportations would continue every day, he made a final entry in his diary before taking his own life: 'It is 3 o'clock. So far 4,000 are ready to go. The

orders are that there must be 9,000 by 4 o'clock.' That day, 7,200 people were assembled for transport to Treblinka, following 6,250 on 22 July. On 5 August came the turn of Korczak's orphanage. One witness, the writer Yehoshua Perle, recalled the scene:

> These 200 children did not cry, 200 innocent creatures did not weep, none of them ran away, none hid. Like sick swallows, they clung only to their teacher and mentor, their father and brother, Janusz Korczak, so that he might preserve and protect them.

Holding two young children by the hand, Korczak led his charges through the ghetto streets to the waiting train.[4]

Between 22 July and 21 September at least 235,000 people were deported from Warsaw to Treblinka. Prior to the deportations there had been more than 51,000 children in the Warsaw ghetto; by November 1942 there were officially fewer than 500.[5]

Twisted though the road to Treblinka may have been, it is important to note that genocide was always implicit in Nazi Jewish policy in the General Government.[6] The violence – against Jews and Poles – that accompanied the invasion marked the crossing of a crucial moral and psychological threshold whilst the various plans for deportation to a Jewish reservation took it for granted that large numbers would die, as Seyss-Inquart had noted in his 1939 report on the Lublin district. Nonetheless, it is also true that German policy until mid-1941 had not advanced to systematic and comprehensive mass murder. Rather, Europe's Jews were to be decimated in the near future through starvation, disease and forced labour in a territory whose location – the Lublin

district, Madagascar, the Soviet Union – was never finally determined, although the failure of such plans in itself brought exactly these developments in situ. In Warsaw alone, more than 70,000 Jews died between January 1941 and the onset of the deportations, around 15 per cent of the ghetto's population.[7]

As is well known, it was Barbarossa that brought the transition to outright mass murder through the wave of post-invasion massacres, of which those in Galicia formed only a fraction. As first Jewish men and then, increasingly, entire communities were murdered in the occupied Soviet territories, the lives of Jews elsewhere were ever more at risk. However, it is now generally accepted that there was no single moment when the Nazi leadership decided to kill all of Europe's Jews. Rather, policy evolved through a series of incremental steps, both at the centre and on the periphery, which all pushed inexorably in the same direction. From early 1941, both Kraków and Berlin expected that the GG's Jews would be deported to the USSR once the war was over, which, of course, meant imminently given the anticipated victory over the Red Army. There is little doubt that this would have led to mass deaths, as in Frank's thwarted plan to use the Pripet marshes as a forced labour site. Furthermore, the murders of Soviet Jews and later of POWs in themselves had a radicalizing effect since they meant that killing was increasingly perceived as an acceptable, and simple, 'solution' to any 'problems', be they illusory or the product of the Nazis' own actions. Nonetheless, as the relative abatement of murders in Galicia in August 1941 following its incorporation demonstrated, it was not yet anticipated that the General Government would itself become a killing site.

However, although Frank continued to hope for deportations eastward, the situation changed in autumn 1941 as military setbacks coincided with and partially triggered a series of important developments at various levels.[8] Pressure came from the Reich following Hitler's decision in September to begin the deportation of German Jews. Although resistance from Frank (and Krüger) ensured that the initial destinations were the Warthegau and the Soviet territories, the threat remained. In the meantime, almost all agencies inside the GG were arguing for radical measures. Following his fruitless meeting with Alfred Rosenberg on 13 October, Frank toured all five district capitals over the next week to hear growing concern regarding the supposed malignant impact of the Jews on the food supply, the black market and the increase in epidemics. This last complaint was echoed by public health officials who, having been instrumental in the creation of ghettos, were now alarmed by the inevitable increase in typhus cases – naturally, they did not attribute this to their own actions, or to the exacerbating factor of the fate of Soviet POWs, instead blaming Jews for leaving the ghettos to smuggle food. At a conference of health leaders in the spa resort of Krynica-Zdrój between 13 and 16 October, speaker after speaker – Hagen was the only exception – pressed for harsher action. To loud applause, Jost Walbaum, head of the public health department, argued that as more food could not be given to the Jews, they should either starve in the ghetto or be shot.[9] It was in the context of such murderous attitudes that Frank issued an order in mid-October which imposed the death penalty on any Jew caught leaving their ghetto or residential quarter, thereby fulfilling a demand made by some officials for almost a year.

Sentences were to be passed by the GG's special courts, but from November onwards police killed Jews on the spot.[10]

Developments in Kraków in October 1941 proved less important than those in the provinces as impatient officials took the initiative. As already seen, Frank's ban on new ghettos had been ignored by the more radical Germans in Galicia such as Gerhard Hager in Tarnopol. Hans Krüger, the Sipo chief in Stanisławów who had already murdered the city's Jewish and Polish intelligentsia in August, then used ghettoization as the opportunity to carry out the largest atrocity in the GG's history so far. Krüger had developed plans for a ghetto in Stanisławów which, like almost all such plans, allocated a wholly inadequate area for it. Following a meeting with his superiors in Lwów, Krüger attempted to solve the problem he had thus created in the most direct fashion. A trial operation was conducted in the small town of Nadwórna on 6 October when 2,000 Jews were murdered. This was a prelude to 'Bloody Sunday' in Stanisławów on 12 October when almost 20,000 people were driven to the Jewish cemetery. Shootings – in which Krüger himself took a leading role – continued until dusk, by which time between 10,000 and 12,000 Jews had been murdered. Those whom the Germans had not had time to kill were set free. The scale of this massacre dwarfed anything which had yet occurred in the GG: almost twice as many people were killed in a single day in one city as in the entire AB-Aktion over several months in 1940. Amongst them were many friends of Elsa Binder, the young woman who had welcomed the Red Army in 1939:

> Samek, a poet and a dreamer [...] Cip. A serious girl with a schoolgirl's smile [...]. Delicate, black-eyed, black-browed, sweet-faced Tamara. [...] Esterka. The

> owner of nice hands and legs that whirled in time with the lively polka lightly and proudly.

Reflecting on the murders three months later, Elsa had one overriding question:

> Why? Why did mothers' sons and children's fathers drive old people, whimpering babies, lively young people, and pregnant women to the cemetery where fresh common graves awaited them?

Although the massacre was presented as a utilitarian necessity to enable the creation of a ghetto (hardly an adequate answer to Elsa's question in any sense), it has been suggested that it reflected a wider decision to begin the murder of the Jews of southern Galicia, evidenced by large-scale killings in the neighbouring Kołomyja Kreis and smaller massacres in other areas. At least 20,000 Jews were shot in Galicia in the autumn of 1941.[11]

Another community affected by these murders was Lwów, where ghettoization again begat atrocities. Unlike Stanisławów, where the police initiated the murders, both Governor Lasch and SSPF Katzmann were pushing for radical measures in Galicia's capital. After Frank's regime was obliged to accept the existence of ghettos in Tarnopol and Stanisławów, Lasch ordered Katzmann to create a ghetto for the more than 100,000 Lwów Jews who had survived the massacres of the summer. The proposed ghetto area was in a poor district in the north of Lwów partially separated from the rest of the city by an overhead railway line. The bridges beneath the railway then served as what Katzmann later termed 'sluices' through which the Jews entering the new ghetto in November and December 1941

were filtered: ‘all the workshy and asocial Jewish riff-raff were seized and subjected to special treatment.’ Several thousand were murdered. As in Stanisławów, those deemed incapable of work were particularly likely to fall victim, a reversal of the situation in the summer when adult men had been the main targets. The ostensible purpose of the operation – the creation of the ghetto – was not actually fulfilled since an upsurge in typhus cases across the city for once led the Germans to suspend the population movements with around 20,000 Jews still left outside the ghetto.[12]

In the absence of wider ghettoization in the rest of Galicia, Katzmann had also developed plans for dealing with Jews considered fit for labour by putting them to work on a project known as Durchgangsstraße IV (DG IV), a road stretching eastwards from Lwów to southern Russia. Most of the road ran through Reichskommissariat Ukraine, where thousands of Jews and others would die on its construction from 1942 onwards. However, it was Katzmann who took the initiative on the GG stretch in the autumn of 1941 when it became clear that the planned use of Soviet POWs would be impossible. The first camps were erected in October to house Jewish forced labourers, up to 4,000 of whom were engaged in road construction by the end of the year. This marked the real beginning of the transition from the previous practice of exploitation of Jewish labour to a conscious policy of extermination through labour. DG IV was intended to serve not only as a construction project – which incidentally used masonry from synagogues and cemeteries to pave the road – but also as a means of decimating the healthy Jewish population of Galicia. In addition to imposing the atrocious conditions which had characterized earlier forced labour camps, Katzmann issued an unwritten order

which called for the shooting of Jews once they became incapable of work. Any who escaped were to suffer the same punishment; if they were not caught, their labour columns were to be literally decimated.[13]

However, it was in the Lublin district that the most important development occurred in the early autumn of 1941. In the context of both the Germanization programme and his fanatical racism, Globocnik was seeking to clear the district of Jews as quickly as possible. With deportation eastwards frustrated for the time being, Globocnik, after consulting with HSSPF Krüger, wrote to Himmler on 1 October with a request for radical measures. The three men met for two hours on 13 October and it is generally accepted that this was the moment at which Himmler authorized the creation of an extermination camp in the Lublin district.[14] It is unclear whether the initiative for the camp came from Himmler or Globocnik but the latter was clearly responsible for its subsequent development. The location chosen was, again, the village of Bełżec though not in the same site as the earlier labour camps. Construction began on 1 November with the deployment of 20 local Poles, who were then dismissed in late December; Jews from nearby villages were brought in to complete the more sensitive stages of the work. In mid-December, Himmler met Victor Brack, the overseer of the T4 murders of adults with disabilities in the Reich, to organize the transfer of Brack's specialist killing personnel to the GG. After experimental gassings of a few hundred local Jews in early 1942, Bełżec was deemed ready.[15]

October 1941 thus marked a decisive moment in the evolution of the Holocaust in the General Government. Whilst Frank's administration pushed for as rapid a removal of Jews as possible, all of the key characteristics of what

would follow – extermination camps, mass shootings, extermination through labour – were emerging at a local level. In the context of wider – as it turned out, abortive – plans for extermination camps in Latvia and Belarus, along with mass murder in Serbia, it seems likely that the fate of the Jews of eastern Europe, if not yet of the whole continent, had been sealed. However, certain questions remain unanswered. One is the involvement of Frank and his administration in the decision-making process. It has been suggested that the Governor General had a central and active role, an argument based partly on some intriguing comments he made in Globocnik's presence on 17 October regarding a 'special commission' from Hitler which would bring him to Lublin more frequently. However, it is not proven that this was connected with Bełżec.[16]

It seems more likely that Frank only became aware of the planned murders when he visited Berlin in November and again in mid-December. During the latter trip, which followed Pearl Harbor, Frank and other Nazi leaders were treated to exhortations from Hitler for more radical action against the Jews now that the 'world war', which the Führer had predicted in 1939 would lead to Jewish 'annihilation', had arrived. On his return to Kraków, Frank explained the new situation to his subordinates on 16 December:

> An end must be put to the Jews – I want to say this quite openly – one way or another. The Führer once said the words: if united Jewry once again succeeds in unleashing a world war, then the peoples who have been hounded into this war will not be the only victims, but then the Jew in Europe will also have found his end. [...]

> But what should happen to the Jews? Do you believe that they will be accommodated in settlements in Ostland? In Berlin we were told: why make all this trouble; we cannot do anything with them in Ostland or the Reichskommissariat [Ukraine] either, liquidate them yourselves! Gentlemen, I must ask you to arm yourselves against any thoughts of compassion. We must annihilate the Jews, wherever we find them and whenever it is possible in order to preserve the entire structure of the Reich here.[17]

In any event, whatever hopes Frank and the civil administration may have harboured of controlling the process were to be dashed. A prime purpose of the Wannsee Conference in January 1942, at which Bühler and the Sipo chief Karl Eberhard Schöngarth represented the GG, was to assert the supremacy of the SS over the emerging Holocaust. Bühler had been invited after Krüger had complained to Heydrich in late November that the Governor General was seeking to monopolize Jewish policy; Heydrich made it clear to Bühler, and therefore Frank, who was in charge.[18] Frank's power – not just over Jewish policy – was further diminished when Himmler exploited the Lasch scandal to blackmail him in early March 1942. Summoned before the Reichsführer as well as Bormann and Hans Lammers (the head of the Reich Chancellery), Frank was confronted with the extensive evidence of his misdemeanours. He was allowed to stay in his post but only after agreeing to promote Krüger to the new post of State Secretary for Security (giving him equal status to Bühler) and transferring control of the Sonderdienst to the police. Furthermore, Frank was forced in practice to accept that Himmler could issue direct orders to Krüger.[19] Himmler's

men could thus take full control over Jewish policy although it should be stressed that the civil administration was fully involved in what followed.

Another major unanswered question is whether the creation of Bełżec represented a decision to murder all of the GG's Jews in situ. The most widely held opinion is that the camp was initially created to kill the non-working Jews of the Lublin and Galicia districts.[20] This does not mean that the remainder were to be spared; rather, it was anticipated that they would possibly die elsewhere and by other means. This certainly appeared to be the perception of the civil administration, as expressed by Frank on 16 December. Overestimating the GG's Jewish population at 2.5 million, with an imaginary 1 million more non-Jewish spouses and mixed-race children, he claimed:

> We cannot shoot these 3.5 million Jews, we cannot poison them, but we will be able to intervene in a way that leads to their successful annihilation, and indeed in the context of major measures that are to be discussed in relation to the Reich.[21]

This would seem to correspond with Heydrich's talk at Wannsee of extermination of able-bodied Jews through labour. Indeed, his specific reference at the conference to 'road construction' would appear to suggest that projects such as DG IV were envisaged as playing a central part in the process. The fact that Bühler requested that the 'final solution' begin in the GG, especially since most of its Jews 'were incapable of work', could be seen as an attempt to pressure the SS into accelerating the process whilst also implying that a decision had not yet been taken to do so, or at the very least that the civil administration was not aware

of any such decision.[22] It therefore seems likely that in late 1941 and early 1942 the Nazis had passed a death sentence on the Jews of the General Government but that it was not yet clear exactly how it would be carried out.

What would become known as Aktion Reinhard properly began on the night of 16 March 1942 when the Lublin ghetto was surrounded. The initial round-up of men at around 10 p.m. was not perceived by the ghetto's inhabitants to be especially unusual since, in the words of an unnamed nurse, it 'was nothing new in Lublin'. However, 'at about 11.30 p.m. the city was suddenly put under bright illumination':

> groups of Germans and Ukrainians broke into apartments, expelling everyone, regardless of dress, down into the yard. Here selection followed, according to age, sex, family, stamps, depending on the whim of the thugs. Needless to say, screams, blows and even shots were part of the process.

After three hours, in which around 30 people were shot, those Jews expelled from their houses were taken to the city's main synagogue 'and there sorted into families who had [work] stamps and those who had not. Toward morning, the former were released.' The others were dispatched to Bełżec on 17 March; within hours, almost everyone on the transport was dead. This process was repeated each day: in the first week of the Aktion, more than 10,000 Lublin Jews were murdered in Bełżec; by the end of the month, the figure had risen to 18,000. Between 23 and 26 March, the residents of the ghetto's hospital, old people's home and orphanages were all taken from the city and shot. 'Unable to bear the suspended horror any more,' wrote the nurse,

some people reported for deportation voluntarily: ‘the Germans were forced to send hundreds of them back home each day, saying there was not enough room for them.’ After a brief lull to allow for deportations to Bełżec from elsewhere, the killings resumed in the second week of April. By late April, the Lublin ghetto was no more. More than 30,000 people had been murdered whilst the remnant were sent to a new ghetto, in the Majdan Tatarski quarter between the city centre and the emerging Majdanek concentration camp. After another selection, only around 4,000 people remained alive. [23]

Simultaneously, a parallel Aktion was occurring in Lwów from where approximately 15,000 Jews were deported to Bełżec in the first month of the camp’s existence. Thousands more were sent from smaller communities in the Lublin and Galicia districts, chiefly those close to the train line which ran through Bełżec on its route between Lublin and Lwów. There were also deportations from southern Galicia, notably Stanisławów, where Elsa Binder observed how the Aktion began on 31 March with the elderly and disabled before quickly escalating to encompass ‘young and healthy people’. Hiding in an attic, Elsa witnessed the removal of ‘children from the orphanage wrapped in bed sheets’. At least 70,000 people were murdered at Bełżec up to mid-April 1942 whilst thousands more, as in Lublin and Stanisławów, were shot during the Aktionen.[24]

One of the characteristics of these early deportations, noted by both Elsa and the nurse, was the role of labour documents in the selection process. This reflected preparatory measures which the regime had been taking since the start of the year. Although the SS had ultimate responsibility, demonstrated by the fact that Himmler visited Globocnik in Lublin two days before the Aktion

began,[25] the civil administration played a crucial if subordinate role.[26] On 20 January 1942 the department of population and welfare in Kraków had instructed the districts to conduct a census of their Jewish communities, which resulted in the issue of new identity documents to Jews; workers were given special stamps. As the Lublin nurse indicated, these papers proved vital in determining who was spared although the 'stamps were quite often ignored'.[27]

This latter point was indicative of the radical interpretation of orders by both police and civilian officials. Goebbels noted the murders in his diary on 27 March:

> The procedure is pretty barbaric and is not to be described here more definitely. Not much will remain of the Jews. About 60 per cent of them will have to be liquidated; only about 40 per cent of them can be used for labour.

However, rather different proportions emerged on the ground. A new identity system had been introduced in Galicia in early April with papers stamped A, B or C (A representing the most skilled workers). Elsa Binder noted that by mid-April the Germans 'were collecting "Bs", they were taking everybody'.[28] Being a worker was thus in itself insufficient for survival. Rather, a two-stage selection process developed whereby those not working for the Germans were the first to be deported; the remnant of workers was then further reduced to those considered most essential. Typically, in the Lublin district especially, less than 10 per cent of a community was left alive. A further sign of hardening attitudes was pressure from officials in as yet unaffected Kreise for the beginning of deportations. On 24

March, for example, the Kreishauptmann of Puławy, Alfred Brandt, requested the quick expulsion of 2,700 Jews.[29]

Such pressures were symptomatic of the further radicalization that gripped the Nazi regime at all levels in the spring of 1942, leading to the extension of the murders to the whole of the GG along with wider escalation across Europe.[30] Construction began in March on a new extermination camp in a remote forested area north-east of Lublin near the hamlet of Sobibór. Killings began in early May.[31] It is possible that this camp may also have originated as a regional measure, partly in connection with deportations to the Lublin district from the Reich (including Austria and the Protectorate) and Slovakia which encompassed 79,000 people between mid-March and mid-June.[32] A 'Jew-exchange' (*Judenauftausch*) system evolved whereby local Jews were sent to Bełżec or later Sobibór to make room for the new arrivals. However, from late May the foreign transports were increasingly sent directly to Sobibór, sometimes after a selection in Lublin in which a minority were dispatched to Majdanek for labour. By late spring, therefore, a more comprehensive programme of murder was under way, as also shown by the beginning of transports to Bełżec from the Kraków district at the start of June. The clearest indication was the beginning in May of construction of a third camp, Treblinka, whose location in the Warsaw district was suggestive.[33]

By the early summer, therefore, the General Government stood on the brink of all-out mass murder.[34] However, the pace of the killings could not match the expectations of the perpetrators, especially after a moratorium on non-military railway traffic began on 19 June. At a meeting on police matters in Kraków a day earlier, the representatives of the districts had pressed Krüger to accelerate the

deportations.[35] Himmler, too, was seeking escalation both in the GG and in Europe as a whole. The Reichsführer's hardening attitude may have been influenced by Heydrich's assassination in Prague on 27 May (he died on 4 June). Although construction of Treblinka was in progress by this point, it is possible that Himmler now decided to accelerate the killings. In any event, the murder programme in the GG was named Aktion Reinhard in Heydrich's honour.

On 9 July, in between regular conferences with Hitler, Himmler met Globocnik and Krüger to discuss a memorandum sent by Globocnik in early June. The Reichsführer then travelled to Poland, first to Auschwitz on 17 July, where he ordered an expansion of the killing facilities at Birkenau, before arriving in Lublin in the afternoon of 18 July. In the midst of several meetings with Globocnik and Krüger and a tour of the district, Himmler issued the momentous order on 19 July that 'the resettlement of the entire Jewish population of the General Government be carried out and completed by 31 December 1942'. No Jews were to remain in the GG unless they were held in 'collection camps' in the five largest cities.[36] With the transport ban having been partially lifted on 7 July and Höfle's team on their way to Warsaw, the most intense wave of killing in history was about to begin.

Between 22 July and 12 September 1942, the principal period of the Great Aktion in Warsaw, more than half a million people were murdered from across the General Government.[37] Even though Sobibór was essentially out of action due to repairs on the railway line, Treblinka and Bełżec (where new, larger gas chambers had been erected during the transport ban) between them devoured more than 10,000 souls per day for seven and a half weeks, as the deportations spread to the Warsaw and Radom districts

(Treblinka) and expanded in the Kraków district (Bełżec). The pace scarcely slackened after the end of the Warsaw Aktion, with transports from all five districts to the three camps – Sobibór resumed operations in October – through the autumn.

Himmler only just missed his end-of-year deadline, for two reasons. One was a new one-month transport ban from mid-December, imposed by the perilous situation on the Eastern Front. The other was an ongoing dispute over the fate of Jewish labourers. During the summer, Himmler and Krüger had felt able to ignore concerns expressed by the Armaments Inspectorate and the GG's labour department regarding the loss of essential workers, offering only to provide enterprises with Jewish labour from SS-controlled camps as a short-term measure. However, Hitler, under pressure from the Armaments Inspectorate, Sauckel and Speer, agreed in September 1942 to retain specialist Jewish workers for the time being. Himmler accepted with bad grace but nonetheless allowed the concentration of Jewish workers in camps although 'even there, in accordance with the wishes of the Führer, the Jews must one day disappear'.[38]

What this meant in practice was that a small number of Jews were spared, held not just in camps but also in 56 'residential districts', essentially remnant ghettos, designated by Krüger in October and November 1942. Even so, the Germans estimated that fewer than 300,000 of the GG's Jews, more than half of them in Galicia, were still alive at the end of the year (although tens of thousands were also in hiding). Before Aktion Reinhard began, there had probably been close to 1.8 million. Not for nothing did Calek Perechodnik, the Otwock Jewish policeman, describe 1942

as ‘that accursed year in the history of the world, one that cancelled the cultural achievements of all mankind’.[39]

The surviving inmates of the ghettos and camps were mostly murdered in early 1943. The Warsaw Ghetto Uprising of April to May only increased Himmler’s determination to finish off the remainder. On 10 May he wrote that their ‘evacuation’ was a matter of ‘the greatest urgency’ as ‘the main prerequisite for the fundamental pacification of the region’. By the summer, only around 130,000 people were left alive, either in labour camps or in hiding. The year 1943 also saw the deployment of Sobibór and Treblinka within the wider European Holocaust. Almost all of the deportees from the Reich and Slovakia in 1942 (in addition to the 79,000 sent to the Lublin district there were also small transports to the Warsaw ghetto or directly to Treblinka) had already perished, whilst from late 1942 onwards perhaps more than 100,000 Jews from Bezirk Białystok (the Polish territory directly to the north-east of the GG) were murdered in Treblinka. The net was cast wider from spring 1943, with deportations of around 20,000 Jews from Greece and Macedonia to Treblinka and almost 40,000 from the Netherlands and France to Sobibór. The very last transports brought more than 10,000 Jews from Minsk and Wilno to Sobibór in September 1943.[40]

The deportations generally followed a familiar pattern modelled on that first deployed in Lublin in March 1942.[41] An initial stage was the concentration of Jewish communities. In many cases this led to the creation of ghettos where they had previously not existed whilst Jews from smaller settlements were often brought to the nearest town where they were held for a few days or weeks. A distinctive feature of the Lublin district, which had the

fewest ghettos before 1942, was the establishment of transit ghettos, small towns on the railway lines to the camps which were initially used to accommodate Jews from the Reich and Slovakia and later those from local communities. After each deportation, the transit ghetto would be replenished with a new group of victims. The most significant such site was Izbica, a *shtetl* located between Lublin and Zamość through which more than 26,000 Polish, German, Austrian, Czech and Slovak Jews passed in 1942. Transports from Terezín and Germany began to arrive in March with space initially cleared by deporting many of the local Jews to Bełżec. The town soon became ridiculously overcrowded as transports arrived incessantly in the spring. Toivi Blatt, a teenage resident of Izbica, recalled that 'the streets were jammed with people; at night, because of the curfew, they filled every corner and corridor of every home'. Ernst Krombach, a German Jew deported there in April, described the conditions in a letter to his fiancée in Darmstadt in August. 'Many go under through malnutrition', whilst typhus had spread through the town. Shootings were everyday events, as in the case of 'more than twenty Polish Jews shot for baking bread' on a single morning. [42]

As in Lublin, Aktionen began with the encirclement of the ghetto or Jewish district. In Kraków, for example, Halina Nelken was roused by 'commotion and screaming' on 1 June 1942: 'Clearly visible from our hill, a detachment of SS marched toward the ghetto; the spearhead had already reached the gate.' Selections were conducted with the utmost brutality, over several days in the case of the larger cities. When Halina returned to the ghetto from work in the evening she was shocked to find that even though it had been a sunny day, 'the pavement was wet, as though it had

rained. Streams of dirty red water flowed through the gutters.'[43]

Hard though it might be to credit with hindsight, the early Aktionen often came as a surprise even though knowledge of the murders in the Soviet Union was widespread. Calek Perechodnik in Otwock explained a common reaction:

> The Jews were killed because they were Soviet citizens and – it is possible – because they fought the Germans. We are, after all, citizens of the Generalgouvernement; such a thing cannot happen to us.

Even after news of the killings at Chełmno in the Warthegau and then Lublin spread, people naturally wished to believe that these were localized phenomena, as indeed they initially were. This was exploited by the Germans, as in Otwock, where officials assured the community that they would be spared in return for bribes, even after the Great Aktion had begun in nearby Warsaw. A common tactic was to sow divisions within the community both by implying that workers would be safe and by informing policemen like Perechodnik that their families would be spared. During the first Aktion in Kielce in August 1942, the Jewish policemen were told that they would remain whilst 'the fate of your wives and children has yet to be determined', dependent on their loyal service. The reactions to such announcements were hardly surprising. The Germans did indeed often initially allow workers, policemen and their families to remain, although far from always. In Otwock, Perechodnik discovered that they had only decided to release wives who did not have children. He was thus forced to witness the deportation of his wife Anna and daughter Athalie who

‘stands and does not cry; only her eyes shine, those eyes, those big eyes’. It was Athalie’s second birthday.[44]

The journeys were horrific. ‘Stifling heat was driving us mad’, wrote Rudolf Reder, who was deported to Bełżec from Lwów in August 1942. ‘We had not a drop of water or a crumb of bread.’ Abraham Krzepicki’s transport from Warsaw to Treblinka in the same month ‘was one big toilet. […] The stink in the car was unbearable.’ Krzepicki was able to buy a cup of water from a Polish railway worker for 500 złotych (‘more than half the money I had’) which he drank whilst a desperate woman whose child had fainted bit his hand: ‘I paid no attention to the pain. I would have undergone any pain on earth for a little more water. But I did leave a few drops [for the child].’ The deportees also had to contend with their guards. Yekhiel (Chil) Rajchman, who was deported from the Lublin district to Treblinka, recalled the constant cry from the Ukrainian escorts: ‘Hand over gold, hand over money and valuables! […] Almost every hour another one of them terrorizes us. They beat us mercilessly with their rifle butts.’[45]

Arrival was thus often greeted as a relief, a sense heightened by first impressions of the camps. Dov Freiberg, deported from Turobin in the Lublin district, found Sobibór ‘looked like a big farm where everything appeared normal’. Richard Glazar, a Czech Jew sent to Treblinka, had a similar reaction:

> This looks like a little train station in the Wild West, and right behind it there is a farm with a high green fence. The fence is a very pretty green. It must be a big farm with lots of cattle – and I know how to handle cattle.[46]

Many transports were treated to a welcoming speech in which they were told that they were going to be put to work after bathing. Especial care was taken with the trains from western Europe, as in the case of a Dutch transport to Sobibór recalled by Toivi Blatt. With ‘a surprisingly relaxed and polite manner’, the SS man

> apologized for the inconvenience. For sanitary reasons they must undress, put their clothing neatly away, and take a shower before relaxing in the comfortable living quarters that were awaiting them. He recommended that they take the prepared postcards and write a few words to their loved ones in Holland to assure them of their safe arrival and good health.

In a reaction that was repeated many times, the crowd applauded. Blatt ‘heard a commotion as the people rushed toward the free postcards’. Polish transports were generally not so gently treated although Rudolf Reder was greeted by a similar speech on his arrival in Bełżec.[47]

Whether thus welcomed or not, the deportees were then subjected to a rapid, disorientating barrage of instructions as they were undressed, stripped of their possessions and the women shaved. ‘The sick, the old, and small children – in other words, all those who could not walk on their own – were thrown onto stretchers and taken to pits’, wrote Reder. In Treblinka, Samuel Willenberg (deported from Opatów in the Radom district) recalled that the deception was more elaborate. Taken to the camp’s ‘Lazarett’ (‘hospital’), the elderly and disabled were met by ‘an orderly wearing a white apron and a Red Cross armband’ who, ‘with great deference, asked them to undress for a medical examination. His tone of voice kindled a spark of hope and

trust.' All were then shot. The majority of prisoners, however, were rushed through the 'tube', an enclosed walkway which, in Rajchman's words, 'looks like a garden path'. This short route led to

> a white structure, on which a Star of David is painted. On the steps of the structure stands a German who points to the entrance and smiles: – *Bitte, bitte!* The steps lead to a corridor lined with flowers and with long towels hanging on the walls.[48]

Only a small number of people were selected from each transport for work in the camp and most of them lasted only a few days. Dozens were shot every day, ensuring, as Chil Rajchman explained, that 'none of us get to know each other'. Any prisoners who succumbed to illness or otherwise weakened were taken to the Lazarett and replaced by members of the latest transport. In due course, however, the camp authorities changed their approach since, as Rajchman noted, the rapid turnover 'meant that the work went badly, since no-one had time to become accustomed to it'.[49]

The 'work' took different forms. Many prisoners were engaged in sorting the vast piles of possessions unloaded from the transports which formed what Glazar described as 'a huge junk store, where everything can be found – except life'. Alongside suitcases he discovered

> thousands of pairs of boots tied together and piled up into a black, scraggly and crumbling mountain, elegant and shabby half boots, slippers, fine lingerie, tattered and infested coats. [...] A black yarmulke is

> lying on top of a red, diarrhea-stained comforter. Next to it are artificial legs and a pair of child's crutches.

Others were more directly confronted with the murder process, as the 'barbers' who shaved the women or the unfortunates who had to remove the bodies from the gas chambers and bury them. In Bełżec some 450 men worked around the pits, piling the corpses to around one metre *above* ground level before covering them with sand. The inevitable problems this caused led in autumn 1942 to the decision to henceforth burn bodies but in the open air, not the crematoria that characterized Birkenau. 'The result was one huge inferno, which from the distance looked like a volcano', wrote Jankiel Wiernik, a Warsaw Jew whose account of Treblinka was the very first to be published, by the Polish underground in 1944.[50] Paradoxically, the cremations lengthened the lives of the prisoners since the task of exhuming and burning the hundreds of thousands who had already been buried took months at a time when the transports began to dwindle.

The urge to survive and the German need to preserve their workforce created a perverted form of 'normality', expressed most famously in the small orchestras which were formed (along with a jazz band in Treblinka) – there was no shortage of instruments.[51] The most striking example of the strange reality of the camps came with the arrival of a transport from Greece in Treblinka in the spring of 1943. Willenberg, like the other prisoners, 'looked in amazement at the magnificent oriental carpets, wonderful rugs, and above all the gargantuan quantities of food'. For Glazar, the transport represented 'the passionate, inescapable dream of an incessantly hungry man'. After gorging on marmalade, meat and biscuits, the mood of the

camp was transformed: ‘Exuberant screams. Laughter, satisfied expressions everywhere. People are stuffed, hot, and glistening with sweat and fat.’[52]

Nonetheless, all were aware that their death sentences had merely been postponed. In the early summer of 1943 a transport arrived in Sobibór in which the prisoners found a note, which turned out to be from their counterparts in Bełżec, where the cremations had recently ceased (killings had stopped in December):

> We don’t know where they are taking us. They say to Germany. In the wagons are dining tables. We have received bread for three days, canned food, and vodka. If this is a lie, you should know that death awaits you too.

The only survivor of this transport was Chaim Hirszman, who had jumped from the train. Indeed, Reder is the only other person known to have survived Bełżec: he escaped when he was sent to Lwów in November 1942 to collect supplies for the camp and his escort fell asleep. He described the prevailing mood of the prisoners as one of apathy. ‘Only when we heard the heart-rending cries of the children – “Mummy, mummy, but I have been a good boy” and “Dark, dark” – did we feel something.’[53] Had it not been for the justly celebrated revolts in Treblinka and Sobibór in 1943, these camps too would have had similarly few survivors. As it was, around 100 inmates of the three camps lived to see the end of the war.

These figures highlight a crucial difference between the Reinhard camps and Auschwitz. Of course, most of the Jews sent to Birkenau did not survive but the fact that it was a slave labour as well as extermination camp meant that at

least a small minority had a chance, however remote, if they were young, healthy and had a trade. Counter-intuitive though it might seem, Auschwitz had the most Jewish survivors – between 5 and 10 per cent of those deported there – as well as the most victims. By contrast, fewer than 0.01 per cent of the Jews sent to Bełżec, Sobibór and Treblinka survived. This figure perhaps brings us nearer to the totality of the Nazi aim to eliminate every Jew in Europe.

Auschwitz is also often seen as the epitome of the glib stereotype of the Holocaust as an ‘industrialized’ killing process. This depiction is questionable enough in the context of Auschwitz but even more so with the Reinhard camps. These were places where murder was perpetrated in the most brutal and often chaotic circumstances. This was especially true in the first month of Treblinka’s existence when its commandant, the physician Irmfried Eberl, sought to make it the supreme killing site by accepting far more transports than the gas chambers could cope with. Trains were kept waiting on the railway track to the camp whilst huge numbers were shot. Franz Stangl, who was brought from Sobibór to replace Eberl, recalled to the journalist Gitta Sereny that the stench from the camp was noticeable ‘kilometres away’. As his party approached, they saw corpses by the railway tracks:

> first just two or three, then more, and as we drove into Treblinka station, there were what looked liked hundreds of them – just lying there – they’d obviously been there for days, in the heat.

In the camp itself, Stangl ‘stepped knee-deep into money; I didn’t know which way to turn, where to go. I waded in notes, currency, precious stones, jewellery, clothes.’ As

thousands of corpses littered the camp square, the Ukrainian guards cavorted with local girls, ‘drunk, dancing, singing, playing music [...]’.[54] Furthermore, at both Bełżec and Treblinka (and presumably also Sobibór) the large motor engines which pumped the carbon monoxide into the gas chambers sometimes broke down; victims were kept in the gas chambers for several hours.[55]

The precise number of victims of the three camps can never be determined. The Höfle Telegram would appear to offer an exact tally for 1942 but it seems rather implausible, given the chaotic nature of the camps (especially during the Eberl period in Treblinka), to believe that the Germans were meticulously counting every death. It may therefore be that Höfle’s figures were for numbers deported, since these were intended to be the same as the numbers murdered, although even here it was unlikely that every single transport was recorded accurately. Furthermore, some people escaped from the trains although, with nowhere else to go, most were subsequently again deported from the surviving ghettos in which they took shelter. The Höfle Telegram should thus perhaps be seen as a close approximation to the numbers murdered in 1942. Given that there were no transports to Bełżec in 1943, the 434,508 mentioned in the telegram can be regarded as near to the actual total. Adding known transports to the other two camps in 1943 gives minimum figures of around 170,000 for Sobibór and 780,000 for Treblinka[56] and a total of at least 1.38 million.

Aktion Reinhard had more than 1.38 million victims, however, since Bełżec, Sobibór and Treblinka were just three of hundreds of sites across the General Government where Jews were murdered in 1942–3. Another was the fourth

camp included in the Höfle Telegram, Majdanek, although its role in the Holocaust has been much misunderstood. The camp had originally been intended for Soviet POWs but they never arrived. Jews, some 74,000 of whom passed through, thus formed the majority of inmates until November 1943. Majdanek has often been compared to Auschwitz – that is, a concentration camp which simultaneously functioned as an extermination centre – but the analogy is misleading. Its primary function was as a slave labour camp to which able-bodied Jews who were *not* selected for the extermination camps were sent, as in the case of the Slovak transports in June 1942 or deportations from Warsaw after the 1943 uprising. It seems likely that it was one of the five 'collection camps' Himmler had envisaged creating in July 1942 for those Jews who were to be temporarily spared. This status was reflected in another of its functions, that of transit camp: around 15,000 Jews were eventually sent from Majdanek to other locations including Auschwitz and Sobibór. The camp undoubtedly became a mass killing site but never in the sense of receiving daily transports like Auschwitz, Bełżec, Sobibór or Treblinka. The gas chambers, which were constructed in late 1942 just as the murders in the Lublin district were concluding, were smaller than in the other camps and used less frequently, primarily on weakened prisoners (as eventually in some of the concentration camps in the Reich) or women and children from new transports. The gassings formed just one – and not necessarily the most important – form of killing in the camp. Large numbers (more than 10,000 in 1942 alone) died from disease, maltreatment and overwork, an illustration that the concept of extermination through labour remained an important element of the Holocaust even if its relative significance in Nazi plans had declined since Wannsee. A

very large proportion of inmates were shot, including an unknown number of typhoid victims in 1942 and then 18,000 people (more than 30 per cent of the 59,000 Jews who died in Majdanek) on a single day in November 1943.[57]

An almost identical role – labour camp, transit camp, mass killing site – was played by another, little known, site: Janowska in Lwów. The camp had its origins in the summer of 1941 when Globocnik's staff had seized a former Jewish factory on Janowska Street in conjunction, like Majdanek, with the plan to create police bases. The factory became the basis of a forced labour camp which developed in late 1941 and expanded in 1942 during which period it came under the control of Katzmann. In due course, tens of thousands of Lwów Jews were sent to Janowska, particularly since it too served as a transit camp during Aktion Reinhard: selections were conducted, with the supposedly unfit sent to Bełżec from the nearby Kleparów train station and the remainder incarcerated in Janowska where they toiled in some of the worst conditions of any Nazi camp, influenced in no small measure by the sadistic commandant Gustav Willhaus. From August 1942, Willhaus and his family lived in a house on the edge of the camp; he and his wife shot prisoners from the veranda for the amusement of their small daughter. The most notorious torture inflicted on the prisoners came in the form of 'death races' where inmates were forced to run in groups. As Samuel Drix, who was sent to Janowska in August 1942, explained, any 'who looked weak or did not run quickly enough were taken out of the rows and put "behind wire." SS men, standing aloof, often tripped the runners to increase the number of victims.' 'Behind wire' was a reference to the adjoining Piaski ('Sands') ravine where prisoners were shot, an increasingly common practice as Janowska became a mass murder site in its own right.

Particularly after the closure of Bełżec, thousands of Jews were brought from the city to be executed in the sands without ever being registered as prisoners. Although there were no gas chambers in Janowska, it is likely that more people were murdered there, mostly by shooting, than at Majdanek.[58]

Janowska's central role in the Holocaust was indicative of the importance of forced labour camps. Although those created before mid-1941 had mostly been dissolved by the beginning of Aktion Reinhard, Janowska and the DG IV camps – manifestations of Katzmann's plans for extermination through labour – were only the first of a new wave of camps. In another link to the murder process, Globocnik created a cluster in Lublin to handle the vast amounts of property stolen from Reinhard's victims. However, it was the summer of 1942 which saw both massive expansion and certain changes.[59] Himmler's failure to get his way over the elimination of Jewish workers led to the establishment of hundreds of new camps for the remnant who had been spared in the ghetto clearances. Some were created in the rump ghettos, especially in the three major cities of the Radom district – Radom, Częstochowa and Kielce – where Jews were initially put to work in clearing the abandoned buildings and later in factories.[60] In other cases, survivors were transferred from ghettos to camps, notably Poniatowa and Trawniki in the Lublin district, which received Jews from Warsaw in 1943, and Płaszów in Kraków, which absorbed most survivors of the final liquidation of the nearby ghetto in March 1943. By June 1943, at least 120,000 Jews were concentrated in labour camps, some of which, such as Poniatowa, held as many people as the concentration camps in the Reich.

The camps were under SS control but most were attached to private businesses such as HASAG for which they supplied workers. Even Globocnik saw their economic potential, leading to the formation of a company known as OSTI (Ostindustrie), in partnership with the SS's Main Economics-Administrative Office (WVHA), which sought to use the assets confiscated in Aktion Reinhard to develop industries based around the labour camps under his control. OSTI turned out to be something of a financial basket case and, at any rate, lost almost its entire workforce in November 1943.[61] Nonetheless, it illustrated that the strategy of extermination through labour was increasingly linked, sometimes uneasily, to economic exploitation.

Himmler still intended that the inmates would eventually be murdered, but the turn in the war made Jewish labour more important, particularly in the armaments factories of the Radom district. In May 1943 even Krüger argued that the Reichsführer's wish could not be fulfilled, especially since the remaining Jews were the physically strongest – 'so-called Maccabees' – and therefore made 'excellent' workers.[62] Himmler did prevail in Galicia, where most remaining camps were dissolved in the summer of 1943, whilst other developments in the same period led him to seek an acceleration of the dissolution of the Lublin district camps. However, Płaszów and the Radom district camps survived into 1944, a reflection of economic demands and the attitudes of the local SS authorities. These camps were still subjected to frequent selections in which weakened inmates were shot or, in the case of Płaszów, deported to Auschwitz whilst conditions in the factories were horrendous. One factory in Skarżysko-Kamienna (Radom district) produced picric acid, used for underwater mines, which turned the skin and hair of the workers yellow and led

to an average mortality rate of 25 per week.[63] Tens of thousands of Jews thus died in the forced labour camps. Nonetheless, the continued existence of such camps in the western regions of the GG brought the paradoxical reality of both extermination and possible salvation through labour.

The history of Majdanek, Janowska and other slave labour camps also illustrates another central element of Aktion Reinhard: the role of mass shootings. Of course, the Holocaust in the General Government began with the murders in Galicia in late 1941 but it is sometimes assumed that the creation of the extermination camps meant that gas chambers replaced bullets, in line with Himmler's solicitous concern for the welfare of the killers. However, as Majdanek demonstrated, mass shootings continued in parallel with the gassings. This was true even, or rather especially, during the most intensive period of the deportations. As the murders in Szczebrzeszyn's Jewish cemetery or the streams of blood in Kraków demonstrated, ghetto clearances were accompanied by murders in situ, chiefly of those who could not easily be brought to the trains, such as the elderly and disabled, or of those who resisted. In other instances, shootings were used as an alternative to deportation. For example, there were no transports from the Lublin district for several weeks in the summer of 1942 due first to the railway ban and then to repairs to the line to Sobibór at a time when Bełżec and Treblinka were receiving transports from other districts. An impatient Globocnik therefore ordered local mass killings, most famously at Józefów where at least 1,500 Jews were shot by Reserve Police Battalion 101 on 13 July.[64]

The deportations were followed by the 'Jew hunt' (*Judenjagd*) in which German forces scoured the villages and forests in the search for escapees. For weeks after the

liquidation of Szczebrzeszyn's Jewish community, Klukowski recorded the ongoing manhunt. On 24 October 1942, he noted that the Germans searched possible hideouts, shooting any Jews they found. By 2 November, the hunt had shifted to the forests. Ever since Frank's shooting order of October 1941, Jews discovered outside ghettos had faced summary execution but the scale reached colossal proportions as thousands of desperate people sought refuge wherever they could. The precise number of victims is unknown but there is evidence that more than 11,000 Jews were shot in the Lublin district in this way up to 1944 and a possibly even greater number in the Radom district.[65]

The liquidation of the remaining ghettos and most forced labour camps in 1943 brought a new wave of shootings, especially in Galicia since deportations to Bełżec had ceased. Although Janowska was the principal killing site, tens of thousands of people were murdered across Galicia, whilst the Lublin district witnessed a frenzied climax to the mass shootings in November. In total, at least 300,000 and possibly more than 400,000 Jews were shot in the GG from the autumn of 1941 onwards, again rather giving the lie to the cliché of industrialized murder.[66] To take one just example, the liquidation of a small labour camp in Szczeglacin in the Warsaw district in October 1942 entailed clubbing the victims into a pit and then spraying them with machine-gun fire, hardly symptomatic of faceless or bureaucratic killing.[67]

Mass shootings also encompassed a portion of Poland's Roma population, although not in a systematic fashion since the Nazis in the General Government never developed a clear policy on 'gypsies'. More than 2,500 Sinti and Roma from north-western Germany had been deported to the GG in 1940, some of whom became the first inmates of

Globocnik's labour camp complex in Bełżec. Others were left to wander or ended up in Jewish ghettos. Several hundred Polish Roma were dumped in the Warsaw ghetto in the spring of 1942 from where they were deported to Treblinka. They were amongst an estimated 2,000 or so murdered in the camp, whilst there may also have been transports to Bełżec and Sobibór. Larger numbers were shot. Himmler urged his subordinates to target itinerant rather than settled Roma but the ambiguity of his orders left considerable room for local interpretation. In the original four districts of the GG, 167 massacres, encompassing at least 3,600 people, were recorded but the figures were probably rather higher.[68]

The killing process in the General Government raises significant questions about the nature of the Holocaust, one of the most important of which is the scale of participation required to perpetrate the crime. Admittedly, the three extermination camps between them were staffed by only around 100 Germans, drawn almost entirely from the professional killers of the T4 programme who ranged from the psychotic Christian Wirth (Bełżec's first commandant and later overseer of all three camps) to the fastidious Stangl. The muscle was provided by 'Trawniki men', auxiliaries from the Soviet territories (including Galicia) who were trained at Trawniki near Lublin, the site of another of Globocnik's menagerie of exotic camps. Although universally referred to by survivors as 'Ukrainians', the Trawniki men encompassed a variety of nationalities, ranging from ethnic Germans to even Russians, who were initially recruited from POWs and later through a mixture of volunteering and conscription in Galicia.[69]

However, although Trawniki units also participated in ghetto liquidations and massacres, they were insufficient to

supplement the Security Police for these tasks. Krüger and Globocnik thus drew upon all available forces, including the regular German police, the Sonderdienst and above all the police battalions. Of greater import, perhaps, is the central role played by the civil administration from Frank downwards, especially at the local level. This was not merely through what might be seen as technical measures such as the allocation of labour documents or the organization of trains or even through exhortations to murder. For example, Otto Busse, Kreishauptmann of Hrubieszów (Lublin district), personally conducted selections whilst his counterpart in Jasło (Kraków district), Walter Gentz, actively participated in the shootings.[70]

Ingrained anti-Semitism was undoubtedly important here, as was the prevailing culture of violence epitomized by the members of Reserve Police Battalion 61 who kept a tally of their totals by leaving notches on the door of their favourite bar.[71] However, there were perhaps other factors at work, as exemplified by Heinz Ehaus, Kreishauptmann of Rzeszów. As panic gripped local Jewish communities with the beginning of deportations from the Kraków district in June 1942, Ehaus demanded that his Kreis's Judenräte give him more than 1 million złotych within a week. The sum was met by the Jews, hoping that they might thereby be spared, but their efforts naturally proved fruitless. More than 20,000 people were deported to Bełżec in July, with a further couple of thousand shot locally. Ehaus used some of his profits to have a sculpture of an eagle placed outside the castle which housed his office, accompanied by an explanatory plaque: 'This eagle, the German symbol of superiority and victory, was inaugurated here on the occasion of the liberation of the city of Reichshof from all Jews in July of the year 1942.'[72]

Robbery was also conducted at an institutional level. In the financial summary appended to his final report to Himmler, sent from Trieste in January 1944, Globocnik recorded that Aktion Reinhard had brought in RM 178,745,960.59 in valuables, although this was undoubtedly less than the actual figure given the well-attested proclivity of the SSPF and his subordinates, especially the camp personnel, to line their own pockets. Included in the report were currencies from almost every country in the world, 1,901 wagons full of clothing and bedding, and hundreds of thousands of pieces of jewellery. These latter items contributed to the more than RM 50 million in precious metals accumulated. Globocnik was not quite as candid as Katzmann had been in his own June 1943 report on Galicia which itemized, amidst the necklaces, earrings and brooches, 11,730 kg in gold teeth and dentures. Frank was keen to secure a share of the loot for the civil administration, prompting an unedifying dispute with the SS which dragged on into 1944 when the Reichsführer finally allowed remaining property to be transferred, by which time there was little left to take.[73]

Another key facet of Aktion Reinhard was the visibility of many killings, most obviously the massacres perpetrated in towns such as Szczebrzeszyn. Even the extermination camps could not be kept hidden. A clue as to why was inadvertently provided by the Baedeker. Bełżec station was referred to as a site where one could catch a postbus to nearby Tomaszów Lubelski, whilst the guide also contained two other apparently innocuous entries:

> From Małkinia to Siedlce: […] The railway curves to the south and crosses the *Bug*; it continues through the

> marshy Bug valley, [and] beyond through heathland and forest. [...]
>
> From Chełm to Włodawa: [...] the train line [travels] along the left bank of the Bug from near *Uhrusk* station and finally to *Bug Włodawski* station, conveniently located 4km south-east of Włodawa.[74]

These were descriptions of the train routes past Treblinka and Sobibór, highlighting an important point: the camps were, indeed had to be, on train lines. This inevitably meant that they were partially visible.

Wilhelm Cornides was a Wehrmacht NCO who was travelling through the south-east of the GG in the late summer of 1942. After seeing a transport of Jews at Rawa Ruska station, he boarded a train to Chełm and fell into conversation with a German railway policeman and the wife of another policeman who promised to show him Bełżec when they passed the camp.

> When the woman called, 'Now it comes,' one could see a high hedge of fir trees. A strong sweetish odour could be made out distinctly. 'But they are stinking already,' says the woman. 'Oh nonsense, that is only the gas,' the railway policeman said laughing.

Although he could not see inside the camp, Cornides witnessed a group of Jews operating a turntable on which a freight car stood. Alongside were sheds, one of which was open: 'one could distinctly see that it was filled with bundles of clothes to the ceiling'. Toivi Blatt had a similar experience in October 1942 during an abortive attempt to escape from Izbica via Galicia:

> a kind of subdued anxiety spread among the passengers. They closed the windows; some lit cigarettes. What had happened? Why did the talk turn to whispers? [...] Despite the closed windows, the odour of rotting flesh seeped through.

As the train neared the camp, 'I saw flames – now fading, now shooting higher into the sky. [...] The smell receded as the train raced on, but I could still see the reflection of fire in the sky.' Even at Treblinka, where a special branch line had been constructed to avoid prying eyes, not everything could be obscured. One day when Samuel Willenberg was taken out of the camp to work in the surrounding forest, 'a passenger train passed. They observed us with curiosity, looked at the forest and at the pillar of smoke rising from the burning corpses.'[75]

With news also carried by couriers of underground organizations and the small number, like Abraham Krzepicki, who escaped from the camps, knowledge was widespread if not universal. Klukowski, for example, first noted the deportations on 25 March 1942. A day later he was reporting speculation that the destination was Bełżec and by 8 April was 'sure that every day two trains, consisting of twenty cars each, come to Bełżec, one from Lublin, the other from Lwów'. Szczebrzeszyn was just a few stops from Bełżec, yet even in distant Warsaw a Jewish Gestapo informant was reporting as early as 24 March (that is, a week after the killings began) the rumours that thousands of Jews had been deported from Lublin and elsewhere: 'there is talk of gassing.' The least was known about Sobibór because of its remoteness, yet in the summer of 1942 both Ringelblum and Kaplan were informed about the camp and precisely described its location.[76] The reports often

contained inaccuracies, particularly the widespread belief that victims were killed either with electricity or steam, but it is striking how much was known.

Indeed, such was the fame of Treblinka that it became a magnet for fortune seekers. Józef Górski, whose estate was close to the camp, recalled that farmers from the nearby village of Wólka Okrąglik sent

> wives and daughters to the Ukrainian camp guards, and were beside themselves with rage when those women failed to bring enough rings or other Jewish valuables obtained in return for their personal services.

The Trawniki men – whom Richard Glazar described as 'swimming in grub, vodka, and money' – transformed the local economy: 'the entire village', claimed Górski, 'looked European, as if moved to this hole in Podlasie.' Franz Suchomel, one of the German officers, told Gitta Sereny that there

> were women who came from all over – Warsaw too, I expect – to do business with the Ukrainians. They may have fucked with them – I suppose they did – but mainly they were round to 'shop'.[77]

These were extreme examples, but intimate and disturbing contact with genocide – whether in the form of witnessing mass shootings or encountering fugitive Jews – was unavoidable for many inhabitants of the General Government, a phenomenon which rather challenges conventional understandings of the most problematic

categorization associated with the Holocaust, that of ‘bystander’.[78]

One of the most remarkable products of the Polish underground press was published in March 1944. A tiny volume printed on poor-quality paper by the same workshop that issued Wiernik’s memoir of Treblinka, *Z otchłani* (‘From the Abyss’) was an anthology of 11 poems written in response to the unfolding tragedy.[79] Amongst them was arguably the greatest of all Holocaust verses, Czesław Miłosz’s ‘Campo di Fiori’. Taking as his cue the burning of the freethinker Giordano Bruno in 1600, Miłosz drew parallels between the Roman market traders soon back at their stalls and events in Warsaw in April 1943 when laughing Easter crowds enjoyed a funfair in Krasiński Square, just feet away from the walls of the burning ghetto:

> I thought of the Campo dei Fiori
> in Warsaw by the sky-carousel
> one clear spring evening
> to the strains of a carnival tune.
> The bright melody drowned
> the salvos from the ghetto wall,
> and couples were flying
> high in the cloudless sky.[80]

Although it may be hard to credit, Miłosz was describing a genuine event: the Easter celebrations coincided with the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising. Michał Wiesław Hajdo, a young underground activist, was so shocked by the contrast between the sound of machine-gun fire and the ‘blaring fairground music’ that

> [r]age overwhelmed me. I began screaming and cursing – people were dying in an uneven battle a few metres away. The merrymakers reacted immediately. They grabbed hold of me, and shouted, 'Now we'll teach you a lesson, you lackey of the Jews.'

Michał was only able to escape from the angry crowd when the commotion attracted the attention of German machine gunners, who fired a volley in their direction.[81]

No one could have accused either Hajdo or Miłosz of indifference to the suffering of others. The former worked for Żegota, the Polish underground agency which aided Jews in hiding, whilst Miłosz was awarded the title of Righteous Among the Nations in 1989 for rescuing Jews from Wilno and Warsaw.[82] However, as in every other European country, such reactions were not universal. This was, and very much remains, a sensitive issue in Poland since a myth developed after the war, fostered by both Communists and nationalists, which paralleled the concept of the 'land without a Quisling' by arguing that Polish society showed almost total solidarity with the Jews, saving tens of thousands in the process, and was only prevented from achieving more by German terror. Only a small criminal minority – chiefly ethnic Germans, Ukrainians and a few social deviants – succumbed to Nazi propaganda and in any way participated in or exploited crimes against Jews.[83] Even in the late 1940s there were intellectuals such as Kazimierz Wyka who challenged this narrative but the topic remained largely taboo. As the literary critic Jan Błoński put it in a penetrating 1987 essay inspired by Miłosz's poetry, 'we want to be completely beyond any accusation, we want to be completely clean. We want to be also – and only – victims.'[84] Naturally, one should also avoid the crude

stereotypes most famously expressed in Yitzhak Shamir's claim that Poles sucked in anti-Semitism with their mother's milk. Nonetheless, Polish historians have produced an immense body of research in recent years which paints a compelling picture. Using previously ignored or inaccessible sources – including the accounts of survivors compiled immediately after or even during the war, German documents, postwar court proceedings and modern interviews with surviving eyewitnesses – it has been irrefutably demonstrated that a significant minority of people were more than mere bystanders.[85] The sources are by definition fragmentary (there were few survivors, and perpetrators were unlikely to be forthcoming) whilst the flawed Communist-era trial documents raise their own problems, yet the sheer weight of cases uncovered cannot be ignored.

A minority of Gentiles participated directly in the murder process, most obviously those who were members of the security apparatus, whether Ukrainian auxiliaries or the Polish blue police, who were widely used in the ghetto clearances and the *Judenjagd*, particularly in small towns or rural areas where German forces were stretched. Klukowski, for example, frequently noted the role of the blue police in the round-ups in Szczebrzeszyn and felt prompted to list those who were especially brutal, notably Jan Gal, 'who is even teaching his teenage son how to kill Jews'.[86] Young men were sometimes also dragged in officially when members of the Baudienst, plied with vodka, were compelled to take part in the ghetto liquidations although not as killers. Apoloniusz Czyński served in Przemyśl, where Baudienst members based at the train station 'would clean the Ghetto, load all the furniture and other stuff on the carriages'. Some 'helped to carry disabled Jews down from

upper floors and they would also take out the bodies of dead Jews'.[87]

Clearly compulsion had a significant effect on such actions if not on the zeal displayed by the likes of Gal. However, there were also a rather depressingly large number of cases where murders were perpetrated or initiated by local people, particularly in the 'Jew hunt'. Klukowski described how some ordinary citizens actively assisted the Germans in the search in Szczebrzeszyn. In other locations, there were individuals and groups who went much further. A report in the *Oneg Shabbat* archives from Łuków (Lublin district) recorded how 'a gang of local peasants, aged 20 to 40, armed with sticks and iron rods' captured escapees from Treblinka-bound trains. The police were phoned and more than 200 Jews were returned to the town where many were shot. However, the peasant gang also beat others to death themselves, 'after which they robbed the body of everything, clothes included'. The most detailed study of the *Judenjagd* – for Dąbrowa Tarnowa Kreis in the Kraków district – has found that in only 7 out of 239 documented murders did the German police act alone. In most cases, Jews were shot after being handed over by peasants or the blue police whilst in a handful of cases they were murdered by the farmers or Polish policemen themselves.[88]

Far harder, indeed impossible, to quantify are murders in which the Germans had no involvement since they were invariably not recorded unless there were survivors who lived to the end of the war. Nonetheless, it is clear from the cases which have been documented that there were hundreds, if not thousands, of such killings of fugitive Jews, often accompanied by torture and rape. The perpetrators were not typically the social outcasts of traditional

historiography but village heads, members of the village guards formed during the occupation, or blue policemen acting unofficially. Some of these murders were witnessed by entire communities. The same could also be true of German crimes. When a group of around 50 Jews was discovered in Szczebrzeszyn a few days after the ghetto liquidation, a ‘crowd looked on’; some residents beat Jews or ‘searched homes for more victims’.[89]

The murder and denunciation of Jews in hiding undoubtedly had significant economic dimensions. This was partly since the Germans sometimes offered rewards – ranging from sugar, vodka and cigarettes to the victims’ clothes – which, however meagre, were an enticement in some desperately poor communities. A more powerful factor was generally a lust for Jewish property, which was powerfully explored by the young Lwów poet Zuzanna Ginczanka after she was denounced in 1942 by Zofia Chomin, the caretaker of the building in which she was hiding. Although she evaded capture, the incident prompted Ginczanka to write her last known work, ‘*Non omnis moriar*’, in which she bitterly bequeathed to Chomin her ‘proud estate’ of ‘Jewish things’ and invited acquaintances to celebrate her memory and ‘their own wealth’:

> Kilims and tapestries, bowls, candlesticks –
> Let them drink all night, and at dawn
> Let them begin to search for gemstones and gold
> In sofas, mattresses, quilts and rugs.

Ginczanka fled to Kraków, where she was arrested and shot in 1944.[90]

Crimes against Jews in the countryside were often motivated not only by a desire for hidden Jewish belongings

(a major reason for the tortures which often preceded murders) but also envy at those farmers who were believed to be getting rich from hiding Jews. This reflected a not uncommon feeling that, since the Jews were to be murdered anyway, their possessions were common property so the rescuers were profiting at the community's expense. This concept was also manifested in the widespread looting which accompanied ghetto liquidations as in Otwock where Perechodnik saw locals 'argue and fight among the not-yet-cold bodies; one tears out of the hands of the other a pillow or a suit of clothes'. He later saw a Polish child in Athalie's pushchair.[91]

In the cities, the greatest threat came from blackmailers, nicknamed '*szmalcownicy*' from the Polish word for grease. Such people were not seeking to denounce Jews but rather to use the threat of discovery to secure a regular stream of profits. Some were purely opportunistic, scanning the streets for anyone with a Semitic appearance to quickly sting their victims. Ringelblum compared these 'wasps' to the more dangerous 'vultures' who sought out Jewish hiding places. The latter seldom left their prey alone once discovered, returning (sometimes with corrupt Polish or German policemen) to squeeze out ever more. As one *szmalcownik* told Hinda Malachi, an Otwock Jew hiding in Warsaw, she 'cannot die yet, because everything needs to be taken from you'. Hinda eventually discovered that the blackmailers were working with her rescuers.[92]

This case exemplifies one of the many 'grey zones' of the Holocaust: the role of money in the rescue of Jews. Many escapees were utterly dependent on Gentile helpers since only a few could survive 'above the surface'. Living under an assumed identity required reliable forged papers, what were termed 'good' looks, knowledge of Catholic rituals and

fluency in Polish.[93] Most, therefore, needed someone to hide them. It is now generally accepted that the majority of cases of rescue involved financial transactions and, indeed, it could hardly have been otherwise. Although many survivors, not wishing to show ingratitude, stressed the altruism of their rescuers after the war, there was nothing inherently immoral about the role of money given the costs and time required to provide for a fugitive (or often fugitives), not to mention the great dangers. As Ringelblum, who was hidden by a Polish family of unimpeachable integrity, asked, 'is there enough money in the world to make up for the constant fear of exposure, fear of the neighbours, the porter and the manager of the block of flats, etc.?' Oscar Pinkus welcomed the fact that he stayed with a poor farmer named Karbicki: 'it was obvious that sheer misery had forced him to consider such a frightful deal, and I always preferred a deal in which we would not have to rely on kindness or charity'.[94]

The key point was not money per se but whether or not the bargain was kept. As Józef Górski noted, some farmers 'hid Jews and were paid large sums of money. Later on, when the constant danger they were exposed to became too much of a burden for them, they cut the Jews' heads off with an axe.' Others increased the price, tried to spread fear through rumours of searches, or threatened to hand their charges over to the police. Such tactics did not always work. When Karbicki insisted that Pinkus and his fellow fugitives leave, 'I asked "If we leave and the Germans catch us, don't you think that they would find out where we were hiding all this time?" The farmer was dumbfounded.' As Leon Weliczker, an escapee from Janowska, noted, once a person 'undertook to shelter a Jew, it wasn't so easy to change one's mind'.[95]

Indeed, as bonds developed, there were paid rescuers who continued to shelter Jews even after the money ran out. The best-known example, thanks to Agnieszka Holland's film *W ciemności* (*In Darkness*), was the Lwów sewer worker Leopold Socha. Krystyna Chiger, who was just seven when her family began hiding in the sewers, recalled that Socha would bring 'whatever we requested'. He even procured candles every Friday for the Sabbath meal, arguing that 'we should keep our rituals and customs even in such feral conditions'. Socha's case illustrates the role of character. 'I did not get the sense that Socha would ever abandon us', wrote Krystyna. 'From the very beginning, I could see that this was not his nature.' Whatever their original motives, those who stuck by 'their' Jews showed immense courage and decency. Weliczker, who was hidden – together with 22 other Jews – by a farmer named Kalwinski, attributed his saviour's actions not only to money but to a 'combination of compassion and a romantic heart'. There were numerous examples of extraordinary altruism and self-sacrifice, such as Michał Gierula, a farmer who was executed after refusing to reveal information about Jews he had been hiding near Przemyśl. One group of escapees from the Sobibór revolt were fed by a poor young peasant woman who refused their offers of payment with gold taken from the camp: 'What for? For the food? You were hungry and I gave you what I could, but not for money.'[96]

The numbers of rescued and rescuers can never be properly determined, with wildly fluctuating estimates having been made for both. It has been suggested that around 28,000 Jews were in hiding in Warsaw at some time during the occupation, of whom around 11,500 survived.[97] However, it is difficult to extrapolate figures for the whole GG from this, given that Warsaw had by far the largest (and

often most assimilated) Jewish community and that it was the centre of the underground state. It is even more perilous to attempt to estimate the number of rescuers. Some have argued that the number of Jews in hiding should be multiplied by a factor of ten or more since several people, especially family members, were often involved in various ways. However, it may plausibly be suggested that the opposite was true as many individuals or families, such as the Wolskis who sheltered Ringelblum and more than 40 others, hid large numbers of Jews simultaneously.[98]

A more pertinent question is whether more could have been done. Clearly, non-Germans could not have prevented Aktion Reinhard. However, at what might seem to have been the margins of the genocide, Gentile attitudes meant the difference between life and death for large numbers of people since these margins encompassed tens of thousands. The decision to offer or refuse shelter, to ignore or denounce a Jew on a country road, to give food to or steal from or murder an escapee from a camp, was not one dictated by the Germans alone. Despite their faith in racial theories, the Nazis could not necessarily recognize a Jew living 'above the surface' whilst many villages saw only irregular patrols. The behaviour of individuals and communities thus made a difference, for good or for ill.[99]

A particularly acute issue was the role of the leadership of civil society. In many respects, the underground state took a clear stand, most notably with the creation of Żegota (the code name of the Council to Aid Jews) in late 1942. Partly funded by the government-in-exile, Żegota came too late to save most yet it proved indispensable in supporting thousands of Jews, primarily in Warsaw, by providing hiding places (and replacements when apartments were discovered by the *szmalcownicy*), food, medical care and

financial support. The children's section, headed by the indefatigable Irena Sendler who had been involved in helping Jews from the beginning of the occupation, placed hundreds of children with families or in institutions such as orphanages or nunneries. It is rightly a source of pride in Poland that Żegota was the only organization of its kind in Europe. The Directorate of Civil Resistance, which issued moral guidance to the nation and oversaw the underground's courts, issued an uncompromising condemnation of the murders in September 1942, followed by a declaration in March 1943 promising severe punishment for blackmailers. *Biuletyn Informacyjny* frequently condemned those who exploited Jewish misfortunes.[100]

However, positive judgements must be qualified. Żegota faced a constant battle for funding, receiving more from Jewish organizations than from the government-in-exile, whilst the right-wing parties refused to support it. Relatively few sentences were passed against blackmailers.[101] Of greater importance was the fact that the underground leadership in Warsaw had only limited control over its subordinates, especially the partisan units in the forests which began to emerge from 1943 especially. To be fair, groups of bandits or unaffiliated forces sometimes claimed to be part of the Home Army (AK), just as many Jewish fugitives assumed that all Polish partisans were members of the same organization. Even so, there were simply too many accounts to deny that some AK units participated in killings, with only the affiliated Socialist Combat Organization universally exempted from blame. That said, it is equally true that a greater threat to Jews came from right-wing paramilitaries such as the National Armed Forces (NSZ),

whose units sometimes killed Jews, Communists and even agents of the underground state.[102]

The NSZ was symptomatic of the failure of many, though not all, on the nationalist right to abandon anti-Semitism. Whilst their anti-German credentials generally could not be questioned, many nationalists – inside and outside the official underground – saw positives in the Holocaust. In an infamous article in August 1942, *Naród*, a paper linked to the centre-right Labour Party, expressed a common conservative view. One should 'pity the individual Jew, the human being' and indeed help him or her where possible. However, Jews were 'an alien, malevolent entity' so 'we are not going to pretend to be grief-stricken about a vanishing nation, which, after all, was never close to our hearts'. Józef Górski similarly differentiated between his reactions 'as a Christian and a Pole'. In the former role 'I could only feel compassion'; in the latter, 'I could only feel satisfied that we were getting rid of this occupier.'[103]

Ambiguities could also be found in the reaction of the churches, a pattern repeated across Europe. There were individual clergymen whose behaviour was irreproachable from the beginning. For example, Shimon Huberband believed that many of the Jews who were sent to the Kampinos labour camp in 1941 owed their lives to the local priest who 'forcefully called upon the Christian population to assist us in all possible ways', prompting villagers to bring food to the inmates. Metropolitan Andrei Sheptyts'kyi, the head of the Greek Catholic church, supported some Nazi policies in Galicia as a means of promoting Ukrainian national ambitions but also personally hid two rabbis in Lwów and ensured that 150 Jewish children were hidden in nunneries.[104] Yet, in general, church leaders, who had often expressed anti-Semitic sentiments in the 1930s, failed to

take a stand. Archbishop Sapieha protested to Frank about the use of the Baudienst in ghetto clearances but otherwise stayed silent. Many monasteries and nunneries did hide Jewish children, saving hundreds of lives. However, even here, problems sometimes emerged at the end of war when parents or Jewish welfare organizations tried to reclaim children. Lena K., a survivor who established an orphanage in Zakopane, found that some monasteries demanded money whilst one nunnery 'resisted as much as they could', claiming that 'these children were already converted, that they were already Catholic children, that we would again make Jews out of them'.[105]

It may therefore reasonably be said that only a minority actively helped Jews, just as a minority actively persecuted them. As in every other country, the response of the largest part of society was indifference with varying degrees of sympathy, ambivalence or enmity. It is undoubtedly true that a major inhibition to greater help was fear. Frank's shooting order of October 1941 had left rescuers potentially liable to the death penalty. Although the numbers so punished were less than might have been expected (in the hundreds), the threat was real, as demonstrated by the fate of Mieczysław Wolski and his nephew Janusz Wysocki who were executed together with Ringelblum and the other 33 Jews they were hiding in March 1944.[106] In the countryside, there was a genuine fear of collective reprisals, whether against families or the whole village, which helps to explain why some farmers changed their minds or other villagers attempted to expel the Jews, especially since, as in other respects, the sołtys did face real pressures from the Germans.[107]

However, there were many crimes which carried the death penalty in the General Government. As Michał Berg

put it, it was clear that the Poles ‘were a courageous people, and were threatened with death not only for sheltering Jews, but for many other things’, such as smuggling or underground work. Yet ‘they kept right on doing them. Why was it that only helping Jews scared them?’ It may well be that the risk of hiding a Jew was greater, but that is in itself suggestive since the Germans were not the only danger. Rather too many survivors’ accounts echoed the experience of Leon Weliczker at liberation: his rescuer Kalwinski ‘asked us not to come back to visit him or for any other reason; it would be hard for him if it were known that he had hidden Jews’.[108] Furthermore, fear can only adequately explain sins of omission – such as the refusal or even cessation of shelter – not those of commission like denunciation or murder.

Some conservatives attempted to explain negative or unhelpful attitudes towards Jews through the concept of *Żydokommuna*, a stereotypical association of Jews with Communism. The supposed welcome given to the Red Army by Kresy Jews in 1939 was seen on the right as a betrayal of Poland, which explained any subsequent misdemeanours against Jews, although the fact that the most common wartime proponents of this theory had been saying much the same thing in the 1930s may be considered revealing. Whilst only a minority might have felt Górski’s ‘satisfaction’ at the removal of the Jews, the traditional anti-Semitism of the right and some elements of the church was perhaps reinforced by the very reality of the removal of the Jews and particularly the temptations which it brought. Calek Perechodnik saw how the opportunity for enrichment encouraged anti-Semitic attitudes: ‘From where did the Jews get such wealth? Wasn’t it from the Polish soil? The time had come for them to repay their debt to the Poles.’ In a

memorandum submitted to the government-in-exile in 1943, the diplomat Roman Knoll summarized what he considered to be the mood of the nation:

> The non-Jewish population has filled the places of the Jews in the towns and cities; in a large part of Poland this is a fundamental change, final in character. The return of masses of Jews would be experienced by the population not as restitution but as an invasion against which they would defend themselves, even with physical means.[109]

One may also suggest that the moral blunting and habituation to violence engendered by the occupation played a role. If some citizens were willing to denounce their neighbours or even brothers for smuggling or underground membership, should we be surprised when they did the same to fugitive Jews?

The behaviour of Gentiles during Aktion Reinhard therefore presented a less than wholly edifying picture. It should be repeated that such a conclusion is not a judgement on Poles (or Ukrainians) but, sadly, on human nature. This was a pattern repeated across the continent.[110] That responses were sometimes more extreme in the GG than in most other territories may primarily be seen as reflection of the fact that it was the central killing ground. Indeed, it could be argued that making judgements about national character – positive or negative – may not be the wisest lesson to draw from the Holocaust. Rather, one suspects that few people could honestly say how they would have reacted in such situations. One striking feature of the Holocaust was that previous attitudes and behaviour were not always a sure guide. There were people like Leopold

Socha, a former petty criminal with three prison terms by his mid-twenties, who proved to be heroes. In Otwock, Perechodnik found that his most reliable helpers were two brothers, Stanisław and Stefan Maliszewski, ‘well-known anti-Semites before the war’ who had fought Jews ‘using means not sanctioned by the teachings of their religion’. Yet ‘they behaved as real believers in Christ and as sincere Polish patriots’, refusing offers of money for their aid.[111]

The best-known, and perhaps most remarkable, example of an anti-Semite who saved Jews was Zofia Kossak-Szczucka, a prominent Catholic writer whose leaflet ‘Protest’ was published in August 1942 during the Great Aktion in Warsaw. After vividly describing the scenes in the ghetto, Kossak-Szczucka condemned the passivity of society and the wider world:

> This silence can no longer be tolerated. Whatever the reason for it, it is vile. In the face of murder it is wrong to remain passive. Whoever is silent witnessing murder becomes a partner to the murder. Whoever does not condemn, consents.

Anti-Semitism was still evident – ‘Our feeling toward the Jews has not changed. We continue to deem them political, economic and ideological enemies of Poland’ – but action was necessary: ‘whoever dares to connect the future of the proud free Poland, with the vile enjoyment of your fellow man’s calamity – is, therefore, not a Catholic and not a Pole.’[112] It was Kossak-Szczucka, already involved in helping Jews, who was instrumental in the creation of Żegota over the following months.

There were many examples of unexpected rescuers. One wonderful case was that of Jan Lewiarz, a Polish Orthodox

priest (a rare breed) from Lwów, and his boyfriend Roman Hawrylak, a Ukrainian nationalist, who protected a Jewish teenager, Lila Flachs, when all three moved to the remote parish of Ciechania; Jan and Lila pretended to be Roman's cousins. Roman's well-known nationalist links proved a useful camouflage for Lila and, one suspects, much else.[113] And it is important to remember that there were Germans who saved Jews. Oskar Schindler, like Socha a man with a past, may have been the most famous but was not alone. In July 1942, Albert Battel, a Wehrmacht adjutant stationed in Przemyśl, persuaded his commander Max Liedtke to protect Jews working for the army. The two men stationed troops on the bridge over the San river which served as the link between the ghetto and the freight station, threatening to shoot the SS should they proceed. Having secured permission to exempt Wehrmacht workers, Battel entered the ghetto, issued 2,500 labour cards and brought 240 Jews to the command building where they stayed throughout the days of the Aktion, fed from the army's kitchen. Battel then rang Kraków to complain that the Aktion had deprived him of workers, enabling him to secure 800 more labour cards. Battel and Liedtke were subsequently transferred whilst Himmler wished to have them arrested after the war. However, whilst their defiance may have damaged their careers, their example more than any other gives the lie to the discredited but still widely believed myth that Germans who refused to be perpetrators would have been shot themselves.[114] The Holocaust was made possible at every stage by moral choices.

Most Germans' choices were less commendable than those of Battel. In the summer of 1942, still smarting from his springtime humiliation by Himmler, Hans Frank toured the

Reich. Whilst this afforded him the opportunity to consummate his rekindled relationship with Lilly Grau, his main purpose was to deliver four lectures at institutions of higher learning. The central theme was the Governor General's concern that Germany was becoming a police state in which the due process of law was ignored. Belated as this recognition may have been, Frank's stance took some courage although the only punishments he suffered were a ban on public speaking and the loss of his legal offices. When Hitler rejected Frank's offer of resignation, he decided to swallow his punishment and to persevere in Poland.[115]

In the meantime, on his return from Germany, Frank had travelled to Lwów on 1 August to celebrate the first anniversary of Galicia's incorporation into the GG. After the public ceremonies, which included a Hitler Youth fanfare and a performance by a 15,000-strong Ukrainian choir, Frank addressed a party rally in the opera house. The Nazis, he claimed, could not thank Hitler enough for giving them the chance to bring 'this ancient Jews' nest' under German mastery. Warming to his theme, Frank claimed that it was clear that the Führer had bestowed a great gift though

> I am not talking here of the Jews that we still have here; we will also finish off these Jews. Incidentally, I have not seen any of them at all today. What's going on? It is said that this city once had thousands upon thousands of these flat-footed primitives, – there are no more to be seen. You're never treating them badly? (Great hilarity)

As the festivities continued in Lwów, 6,220 Jews were deported from Warsaw to Treblinka on 1 August 1942, the

day that should have marked the beginning of the ghetto's Month of the Child.[116]

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7
‘The crying of the children’
Ethnic cleansing

All that is known of Czesława Kwoka’s life before the war is that she was born on 15 August 1928 and that her mother’s name was Katarzyna.[1] The family toiled as presumably poor farmers in the hamlet of Wólka Złojecka until early December 1942 when they, and the village’s other Polish inhabitants, were forcibly expelled from their homes and sent to a transit camp in nearby Zamość. Czesława and Katarzyna’s stay in the camp was a short one, as on 10 December they were amongst more than 600 peasants placed on a transport which arrived in Auschwitz on the evening of 12 December. The prisoners were held overnight before being registered the next morning.[2]

Unlike most Jews, the majority of whom were sent straight to their deaths in Birkenau, new Polish inmates were given prisoner numbers (26946 for Katarzyna, 26947 for Czesława) and photographed. The pictures of the Kwokas, and thousands of others, were taken by Wilhelm Brasse, a Polish political prisoner from Silesia who had been sent to Auschwitz in August 1940. Brasse had trained as a portrait photographer before the war, prompting the camp administration to assign him to the team of inmates who

photographed new arrivals. During the evacuation of the camp, the Nazis ordered the destruction of the portraits but Brasse and his colleagues were able to hide several thousand negatives, images which now constitute one of the most powerful exhibits in the Auschwitz museum. Brasse recalled Czesława's case in the 2005 documentary film *Portrecista* (*The Portraitist*) and in a subsequent interview with a British newspaper. She 'was so young and so terrified. The girl didn't understand why she was there and she couldn't understand what was being said to her.' A female Kapo (Kapos were privileged prisoners who oversaw others) 'took a stick and beat her about the face. This German woman was just taking out her anger on the girl. Such a beautiful young girl, so innocent. She cried but she could do nothing.'[3] The triptych of photos of Czesława, showing a frightened teenager with a bloodied lower lip, is perhaps the most haunting of all of Brasse's images.

Katarzyna Kwoka died in Auschwitz on 18 February 1943, just two months after arriving in the camp. Czesława died less than a month later on 12 March, on the same day that two Polish inmates from the very first transport (from Tarnów in 1940) – Jan Sarapata and Aleksander Martyniec – escaped.[4] The cause of Czesława's death is unknown although it is likely that she either succumbed to disease or was murdered with an injection of the poison phenol. She was 14 years old.

The train of events which led to the death of Czesława Kwoka, and thousands of others, was closely connected with Aktion Reinhard. Although the Nazis never developed plans for the systematic killing of Poles, the Zamość Aktion evolved in parallel to the murder of the Jews of the General Government and was perpetrated by the same individuals

and agencies at almost the same time.[5] Its roots could be traced back to Himmler's visit to Lublin in July 1941 when he had ordered the construction of Majdanek and the beginning of the Germanization of Zamojszczyzna. This led to a trial operation in November of that year in which the Polish populations of seven villages – more than 2,000 people – were displaced to make room for 105 ethnic German families from the Radom district. The evacuation was carried out by members of Oskar Dirlewanger's SS brigade of convicted criminals; Globocnik had already used Dirlewanger's men to staff the Bełżec labour camps in 1940 and Janowska in 1941, an indication that the first Zamość operation was not carried out delicately. Nor was it carried out entirely successfully, as indicated by a report from Helmuth Weihenmaier, the Kreishauptmann of Zamość, on 20 November: plans to transport the villagers further east had been stalled by the German authorities in Wołyń whilst the resettlements had caused 'a number of undesirable side effects' as 'many Poles and Ukrainians' succumbed to fear that they would be next, leading some to abandon their villages. Weihenmaier was particularly concerned about the impact on the delivery of food quotas, a fear apparently borne out of rumours recorded by Klukowski that 'in some of the villages farmers are destroying their own crops'.[6]

Himmler and Globocnik were undeterred, however. In his already quoted report to Berlin of 15 October 1941, Hellmuth Müller had explained that Globocnik intended 'the German settlement of the entire Lublin district' in order to form a link between the already existing German communities of the Baltic states and Transylvania. The aim was thereby 'to gradually crush economically and biologically' the remaining Poles. The simultaneous decision to create Bełżec was in part linked to these ambitions – and

the wider, evolving Generalplan Ost – since the elimination of the Jews of the Lublin district clearly offered the possibility of accelerating the planned demographic reordering. Himmler visited Kraków for talks with Frank on 13–14 March 1942 before proceeding to Lublin to meet Globocnik on the eve of Aktion Reinhard. Much of the discussion with the Governor General focussed on the increase in Krüger's powers, but Himmler and Frank also covered what the latter's diary described as 'the ethnic question'. The Reichsführer sought the reconstruction of the 'historically German' city centres of Lublin and Zamość as residential areas for Germans and the settlement of ethnic Germans in Zamojszczyzna. This reflected his broader plans for eastern Europe which were to be implemented in 'the next years' in the Baltic and Crimea as well as the GG. Echoing Globocnik, Himmler expressed his hope of encircling the Poles.[7]

The spring and summer of 1942 marked the high point of Himmler's enthusiasm for Generalplan Ost before the military situation forced him to temper his ambitions.[8] It was in this context that he definitively approved the designation of the General Government as a German settlement zone, ten days before his visit to Lublin of 18–20 July.[9] On 19 July – the same day that he issued the order for the completion of Aktion Reinhard by the end of the year – Himmler toured the Zamość region to view the potential sites and ordered Globocnik to accelerate preparations. Krüger unveiled the Reichsführer's plans at a session of the GG administration in Lublin on 4 August: Himmler intended to settle ethnic Germans in the Lublin district with tens of thousands of Poles being displaced in the process. Frank imposed conditions – the Aktion should cause no disturbances (a forlorn hope, as it turned out) and plans should be

submitted to him – but he ultimately agreed to the programme. This reflected the Governor General's characteristically schizophrenic approach. On the one hand, Frank – like Himmler – was enraptured with the vision of a German East, as on 6 June when he told the Hitler Youth leader Artur Axmann that the GG was as much German Lebensraum as any province of the Reich and that its district capitals should become the equivalents of Vienna or Hamburg. He even secretly commissioned Bühler in late August to study the potential for the GG's formal incorporation into the Reich. On the other hand, Frank also recognized that Germany relied on Polish workers and peasants in the short term. As he put it on 15 August, although the GG would become a 'purely German' land in the decades to come, the Poles had to remain for the duration of the war.[10]

Himmler pressed ahead anyway as his officials developed detailed plans for the expulsion of tens of thousands of Poles – initially 73,000 but upped to 140,000 on the Reichsführer's orders, in an echo of his over-ambitious deportation schemes of 1939–40. They were to be replaced by ethnic Germans from across Europe whose numbers and countries of origin continued to change as the RKFDV planners in Łódź, who were to provide the settlers, struggled to bridge the gap between Himmler's grandiose visions and the inconvenient reality. By late October even Globocnik was complaining of a lack of suitable settlers – many of those proposed were not farmers whilst tens of thousands had not yet even reached Łódź – leading the SSPF to suggest that the larger Aktion be postponed until spring 1943; only 'a small resettlement' should take place in 1942. Nonetheless, Himmler issued the decisive order on 12 November 1942 which designated the Zamość Kreis as the 'first German

settlement district in the General Government': it would become a 'new secure homeland' for ethnic Germans from Bosnia, the Soviet territories, the GG itself and other territories to be determined.[11]

The operation began on the night of 27–28 November with the village of Skierbieszów. Stanisława Teresa Syska was ten years old at the time:

> they gave us only five minutes to prepare to take some things out of the home, disregarding the weeping of the children and the requests of our parents. My parents thus took only bundles with bedding because it was already cold.

In the first four days, 12 villages were cleared; by the end of the year, the number was 60. However, the Aktion did not proceed quite as the Germans had anticipated since only 9,771 of the 33,832 inhabitants of these villages were actually captured, a reflection of the panic caused. 'The forests are full of people', noted Klukowski on 14 December, although most, with nowhere else to go, could only 'wander aimlessly'. Many women and children in particular were soon captured, forming the largest portion of the 7,055 people sent to the transit camp in Zamość by the end of 1942; the other 2,716 captives were left on the land, in part a reflection of the difficulties in recruiting sufficient German settlers.[12]

Tens of thousands eventually passed through the Zamość camp and another which was established in nearby Zwierzyniec in the spring of 1943. Both were predictably characterized by overcrowding and appalling maltreatment. Sister Teresa was a nun who worked in the Zamość camp hospital:

> In the barracks children lay on the floor or on some planks without straw and were covered with their own clothes. Barrack No. 16 had no floor at all and people lay there on the earth. In cold weather condensed drops of vapour drizzled from the ceiling, the barrack was muddy, and people, quite soaked, had to lie there in the mud.

Alfred Świst, a peasant from Wisłowiec who was one of the first arrivals in the camp, recalled that when the Germans discovered excrement near a barrack housing children and old people, they ordered them 'to clean the place with their bare hands. All were threatened that if any filth were found again each of them would be forced to eat it.'[13]

Prisoners were subjected to a process of selection according to categorizations modelled on prior experience in the Warthegau. Group I – which in practice was not expected to exist – consisted of those considered German whilst Group II contained people deemed potentially suitable for Germanization based on the inexact criteria so typical of Nazi 'racial science' such as family names and appearance. Members of these groups were to be sent to Łódź for further screening by officials of the Central Agency for Immigration (EWZ) which had performed a similar role in the Warthegau deportations. Only 285 had been thus transported by the end of 1942, according to a report by the EWZ chief Hermann Krumey. The vast majority were placed in the other two categories: Group III which contained Poles considered fit for work and Group IV which represented the supposedly unfit or undesirable. Those aged 14 to 60 in Group III were to be used as forced labour either in the Reich (1,310 deported by the end of 1942) or the GG. Members of the same age cohort in Group IV were sent to Auschwitz

(644 according to Krumey but actually higher). Children under 14, the elderly, sick and disabled were sent to so-called Rentendörfer (‘rest villages’) and left to fend for themselves; three transports carried 2,207 of these unfortunates up to the end of the year. This left more than 2,500 prisoners who had not been deported onwards by 31 December 1942. Many remained in the camp prior to further transport but others had, in Krumey’s words, left Zamość ‘through death, escape, etc.’. Alfred Świst, who was required to dispose of corpses, estimated that around 500 children and old people were buried during the four months he was in the camp. The bodies were taken to the Zamość cemetery by wheelbarrow and dumped in ditches.[14]

It was the plight of the children which aroused the greatest passions. The process began with separation in the camp, as recalled by Bolesław Świst, also of Wisłowiec:

> I saw children being taken from their mothers; some were even taken from the breast. It was a terrible sight: the agony of the mothers and fathers, the beating by the Germans, and the crying of the children.

Karolina Mazurkiewicz ‘struggled when they wanted to take my children. I did not want to give them up. So a German struck me on the face with his revolver.’[15] Together with the elderly, the children were then packed onto trains in the middle of winter, in deportations to the Rentendörfer – located in what Krumey euphemistically termed ‘abandoned Jewish villages’ in the east of the Warsaw district – which continued into early 1943. In a request to the Ostbahn in January, Krumey explained that he would be happy to accept freight cars if passenger wagons were not available.

The results were predictable. An undated report from the Warsaw SD recorded that most of the 2,158 deportees who had arrived in Garwolińń were children up to the age of ten; 13 were dead on arrival and others perished in the following days. In Siedlce, around 20 members of a transport of 2,100 had died on the train whilst 80 had to be immediately sent to hospital where many again lost their lives. Dozens more died when sent on to surrounding towns. A subsequent Polish report listed 92 deportees who died in the Siedlce hospital, at least 62 of whom were children. The youngest victim, Augustyn Magdziak, was only nine months old when he succumbed to bronchopneumonia on 3 February 1943, three days after entering the hospital. His mother Aniela (who, unusually, had been able to accompany her children) and three-year-old brother Stanisław died in the following weeks.[16]

As the SD report noted, rumours of the transports ‘spread like wildfire’ through Warsaw ‘and led to excited discussions within the Polish population’ in early January 1943. ‘All Warsaw talks today of only one thing,’ wrote Ludwik Landau on 7 January: ‘these children of Zamojszczyzna.’ Jan Starczewski, director of the city’s welfare and health department, recalled ‘a strange procession’ as citizens searched every wagon, ‘including those on the most distant sidings which were some 3 kilometres away’, when it was rumoured that a deportation train had entered the city. Hundreds of children were rescued as people flocked to the stations and Rentendörfer although immense physical and psychological problems remained. Starczewski located a group of children in Stoczek and had around 30 brought to Warsaw where they were visited by Wilhelm Hagen:

> A two-year-old boy was embracing a little girl of perhaps five. The girl was holding her brother tightly in her arms. Both children looked emaciated, their little faces were pale, their eyes filled with fear. Dr. Hagen asked why they were not in the beds. It was no easy job to make the little girl answer. At last, somewhat encouraged, she whispered 'They've taken Mummy and Daddy away, I won't let Wojtuś go'.

An SD agent was able to visit a group of around 25 children in hiding, more than half of whom were aged three or under. He considered that only three of the children were healthy: 'All of the rest suffered from frostbite to the hands, feet, cheeks and noses.'[17]

The fate of children sent to Auschwitz, like Czesława Kwoka, was even worse. The Nazis had originally intended for there to be regular transports from Zamość to the camp but only three were ever sent. The failure to dispatch more trains was partly due to the failure to capture as many Poles as expected and to the perilous transport situation (it should be remembered that even transports of Jews to the Reinhard camps were suspended from mid-December). However, it also reflected opposition from the Auschwitz authorities. The first transport, carrying the Kwokas, had officially contained 644 prisoners, three of whom escaped with the help of Polish railway workers when the train stopped in Kraków. The SS officer responsible for the transport counted a further 11 absent on arrival, although 632 prisoners were in fact registered in Auschwitz. Of these 632, at least 92 were under the age of 18 whilst many of the adults were in their fifties. The oldest, Józef Niścior, was 73. The composition of the transport prompted a furious outburst from Hans Aumeier, the Auschwitz deputy commandant:

> only able-bodied Poles should be sent so as to avoid as far as possible any useless burden on the camp as well as the transport system. Dimwits, idiots, cripples and sick people must be removed as soon as possible through liquidation to relieve the strain on the camp.
>
> This measure, however, is made more difficult by the instruction of the Reich Main Security Office that, in contrast to the measures used against the Jews, the Poles must die a natural death. It is desired by the camp leadership in this respect to abandon the assignment of those incapable of work.[18]

These objections may help to explain why there were so few transports. This is not to say that all of the Poles died the natural death required by Aumeier's superiors. Jan Szczepanowski, a Polish political prisoner in Birkenau, witnessed the arrival of the transport and noticed the large number of children, including 45 or so boys:

> The Germans started a rumour in the camp that the boys would be sent for training as bricklayers. As I found out, the Germans transferred these boys to the camp at Auschwitz to Block 13 where they remained for two days, after which they were killed with injections and cremated.

In fact, there were a number of executions from this group in early 1942. Amongst the victims was nine-year-old Tadeusz Rycyk who, together with another boy, Mieczysław Rycaj, had originally been registered as girls after they had hidden with their mothers; both were killed with phenol on 21 January 1943. Tadeusz's sister, Helena, was the youngest of all the deportees at just six although she managed to

survive for almost a year. Their elder brother Stanisław (12 years old) had died on 7 January 1943. Only the mother, Feliksa, survived Auschwitz and later Belsen. More than 75 per cent of the people on the transport died in Auschwitz, most in the first few months. Others died after transfer to other camps, principally Buchenwald and Ravensbrück. Similar death rates applied to a small transport of 86 people which arrived on 16 December and to the final train of 583 on 5 February. At least 981 of the 1,301 people deported to Auschwitz from Zamość lost their lives in the camp.[19]

In such circumstances, it was hardly surprising that the terror which took hold of the Polish population in and beyond the Zamość region was increasingly expressed in a formula which did not escape the notice of the Germans. As Krüger put it in January 1943, whilst insisting that the Aktion would continue, Poles were claiming that the Germans were attempting 'to liquidate them like the Jews'. There were also Germans who believed this to be true. As early as 7 December 1942, Dr Hagen was prompted to write a protest letter to Hitler after Lothar Weirauch (head of the GG's population and welfare department) had told him that plans were being considered in the context of the Zamość Aktion 'to deal with 70,000 old people and children under the age of 10 like the Jews, that is, to kill them'. Hagen resigned in February but no further action was taken against him despite Himmler's wish for his imprisonment.[20]

It was in this climate of fear that tens of thousands of villagers fled to the forests. On 7 December 1942 Klukowski noted that 'more and more people are trying to organize fighting units.' Diary entries in the following weeks recorded the growing numbers, prompting the doctor to compare the movement to the 1863 uprising against the Russians. Some of these units were linked to the official underground but

most were improvised. Indeed, open resistance when there was little chance of success ran counter to the strategy of the underground leadership at this stage yet the anger of the peasants increasingly could not be restrained. As Klukowski observed, they had ‘only one goal, revenge’.[21] The consequences were soon evident.

An article in the *Warschauer Zeitung* of 3 January 1943 entitled ‘A Village Awakes to a New Life’ had presented an idyllic picture of weary German refugees from Bolshevism finding a refuge in their new homes:

> children frolic around the houses, and their shouting is audible to us on the road. These children have reason to indulge their cheerfulness, since for them beckons a, perhaps toilsome, but sunny future.

The reality was rather different. As early as 8 December 1942, Klukowski noted that the new arrivals from Bessarabia were ‘so afraid of staying that shortly after receiving their new homes they escape to the towns’. Two days later, he recorded the first major partisan raid, on the village of Nawóz, in which farms were burned down and, although the doctor did not know it, several settlers killed. This prompted a German reprisal action against nearby Kitów which resulted in the murder of more than 150 Polish villagers.[22] The cycle of violence escalated in the following weeks, with Himmler authorizing the destruction of entire villages. In the meantime, the expulsions continued, spreading from the Zamość and Tomaszów Kreise to the neighbouring Hrubieszów Kreis in the new year.

The growing unrest generated concern within the regime, particularly from Zörner, who presented a detailed memorandum to Frank in late February. Although there were

inaccuracies, such as the claim that most Poles had been sent to Auschwitz, the Lublin governor intelligently analysed the impact of the Aktion on his district. Poles and Ukrainians feared that they were to be treated like the Jews or sent to concentration camps, prompting an exodus from the farms and the destruction of crops and livestock. Many of the escapees had joined partisan groups with the result that dozens of German settlers had been killed or wounded whilst arson and 'banditry' had increased. Officials in the Warsaw district were also worried about the effects of the transports to the Rentendörfer on Polish public opinion. The aforementioned SD report recorded that the funeral of 20 evacuees in Siedlce had turned into 'a demonstration of the Poles against German measures' which was attended by up to 4,000 people. Frank, however, failed to take a clear stand. When Bühler and others raised doubts about the Aktion at a meeting on 22 February 1943, the Governor General did indeed question its advisability 'in the present difficult times' yet reminded his officials that it was 'the wish of the Führer' that the GG be Germanized and cautioned them against judging the matter 'from the viewpoint of benefits and losses'. To objections that the deportations would damage agriculture, Frank replied that the German settlers would probably be able to produce better yields.[23]

The Governor General's pusillanimity reflected not only his ambiguous attitude to Germanization but also the weakness of his position in early 1943. His old foes Himmler, Bormann and Lammers, as well as Speer, were plotting to remove him, culminating in the compilation in April of a dossier by Krüger listing Frank's many failings which ran to almost 100 pages. By 7 May, Goebbels – who had previously shown some sympathy – reported that the situation in the GG was so bad that 'Frank can no longer be retained in his

post’ and that he would probably be replaced by Arthur Greiser, leader of the Warthegau. However, for reasons which remain unclear, Hitler decided to give the Governor General another chance at a meeting on 9 May, provoking dismay amongst the Führer’s closest acolytes, including Goebbels who wrote on 22 May: ‘I should have thought it better to kick Frank right out.’ Zörner, against whom the SS had also been plotting since 1942, was less fortunate, leaving his post in April 1943 through a combination of pressure from above and his own frustrations. His old friend Goebbels blamed the governor’s fall on the Zamość Aktion and on Frank’s inability to stand up to the SS: ‘It makes you want to tear out your hair when you encounter such appalling political ineptitude.’[24]

By the time of Frank’s reprieve, the Aktion had been temporarily halted. Although Globocnik had rejected Zörner’s criticisms in an extraordinarily mendacious report to Himmler in mid-March which asserted that, amongst other things, only 40 criminals had been sent to Auschwitz, he had already recommended tactical concessions, particularly the suspension of the expulsions during the sowing of the new harvest. This contributed to a lull in the operation although immense damage had already been done: between 27 November 1942 and March 1943, 116 villages were evacuated and more than 40,000 Poles displaced though only around 15,000 were captured. In addition, several thousand Ukrainians were uprooted. Around 9,000 ethnic Germans had moved in. Driving to Zamość in mid-May, Klukowski passed through villages which were ‘completely destroyed. [...] Everywhere you can see young German boys in *Hitlerjugend* uniforms.’ However, he also noted that in ‘the past few days several evacuated

villages have been burned down by the partisans. Some were already occupied by German settlers.'[25]

Somewhat paradoxically, the resistance provoked by the Aktion made it easier for Globocnik and Himmler to justify a resumption of expulsions in June. Despite continued unease from the civil administration, this new wave was perpetrated under the guise of two massive anti-partisan campaigns code named Wehrwolf I and II. Whilst there was indeed fierce fighting in the forests, Wehrwolf afforded Globocnik the opportunity to clear 171 villages far more systematically than the original 116 since he was able to deploy Wehrmacht and Waffen-SS forces. One of the earliest villages targeted was Suchowola, whose sołtys later recalled the militarized nature of the operation. In the first stage, on the night of 29–30 June, 'motorized and armoured units surrounded the village' and seized all males aged 13 to 60. Extensive hunts were conducted for escapees: 'Where the corn was thick every metre was carefully searched. Planes flying low overhead stalked the people in the fields indicating them with smoke or else by diving.' The Germans returned on 9 July to deport the remaining villagers: 'the old, mothers and children [...] a total of 2,730 persons'; 21 people, including three children, were killed.[26]

Such tactics enabled the Germans to seize around 36,000 of the approximately 60,000 villagers. Detainees were sent to Majdanek or the two transit camps. Klukowski visited the Zwierzyniec camp on 1 August and found 'people who were barely moving'. In the adjacent small hospital Polish welfare workers were caring for around 40 infants who looked 'like skeletons'. The expulsions also encompassed urban areas. The operation in Szczebrzeszyn began on 1–2 July when the town was surrounded as a prelude to mass arrests and the checking of identity papers, reminding Klukowski of the

liquidation of the ghetto. The Aktion began in earnest on 10 July as those without labour cards were transported to Zwierzyniec and citizens went into hiding. The first new German settlers arrived on the same day and soon began occupying the evacuated homes. Evictions continued in the following days: Ukrainians were moved to villages to the south-west though, unlike Poles, with the provision of horse-drawn carts and the freedom to take all of their goods. Klukowski's status as a physician meant that he was allowed to stay but the town was 'practically deserted'. Even 'the church vestments, chalices, monstrances' and other sacred items were stripped for transport to Germany.[27]

The Aktion ceased in August 1943 but could hardly have been considered a success. Although Klukowski bemoaned the Germanization of Szczebrzeszyn and Zamość ('On the streets most people are Germans. [...] Children run carrying swastikas', he wrote of the latter in September), the countryside had not been made safe for the settlers. Even before Wehrwolf, the tit-for-tat struggle between the occupiers and the partisans had turned into a bloodbath. On 1 June the Germans had destroyed the village of Sochy, killing close to 200 people as soldiers torched buildings and machine-gunned the inhabitants whilst planes dropped bombs. In retaliation, partisans raided the colonized village of Siedliska and killed 13 settlers on the night of 5–6 June. German counter-reprisals inevitably followed but settler insecurity was increasingly evident. That the Wehrwolf campaigns did not solve the problem may be judged by the fact that partisan attacks continued throughout the autumn. On 17 September, a raid on the village of Rachanie resulted in the theft of a car, three pigs, two horses, a wagon of clothes and the weapons of the local auxiliary police whilst the telephone lines, agricultural machinery and the village

head’s furniture were destroyed. Similar assaults appeared in Klukowski’s diary in October and November. Partisans took livestock and beat any settlers who resisted.[28] The Germans had lost control of the countryside.

The disillusionment of the settlers – from Croatia and Bosnia, Bessarabia and Bukovina, and even Luxembourg – was one small element of the immense human misery brought by the Zamość Aktion. More than 100,000 people had been expelled from their homes and many thousands of them died – in transit or concentration camps, in the dead zones of the Rentendörfer, in the struggle to survive in the forests, or even in their own villages as the Germans increasingly shot or bombed those who attempted to evade capture. It is estimated that around 10,000 of the approximately 30,000 children uprooted by the Aktion lost their lives. Others faced a different fate. The RGO obtained a copy of a German report which showed that 4,454 children from the age of two upwards had been transported to the Reich from Zamojszczyzna to undergo Germanization between 7 July and 25 August 1943 – whether more were sent at other times is unknown. This policy reflected the ideas set out in Himmler’s 1940 memorandum on the treatment of ‘aliens’ in the East, a theme he returned to in an extraordinarily long speech in Poznań in October 1943 which is rather more famous for its description of the Holocaust as ‘an unwritten and never to be written page of glory in our history’. Wherever the Germans found ‘good blood’, they would take it, even by, ‘when necessary, abducting the children and raising them ourselves’.[29]

It is believed that around 50,000 eastern European children were seized by the SS during the course of the war. The process in the GG started later than in the incorporated territories and was never as systematic but it undoubtedly

affected thousands and extended beyond the Zamość Aktion. Poles considered to have German roots were particular targets. As Klukowski noted in February 1943, ‘the Germans are calling on women with maiden names of German origin. They are asking about their children.’ In 1942 Himmler had authorized the deportation to concentration camps of parents who refused to register as ethnic Germans and the seizure of their children. Arbitrary criteria such as hair or eye colour could put a child at risk, especially once the Nazis began group abductions from orphanages and schools in 1944. Although some infants were sent for adoption by German families, many of the children were transported to camps to undergo further screening and to begin the process of Germanization. Six-year-old Mieczysław Domański was amongst a group of 80 children seized from his school in the Radom district. He was sent to a camp in Ratibor in Silesia which held around 50 boys who were whipped whenever they spoke Polish. Similar punishments were inflicted when Mieczysław was transferred to a large camp in Zwickau in Saxony, where boys were overseen by the SS.[30] Quite how many children were stolen from their families in the GG is unknown, not only due to fragmentary records but also because most, especially the younger, were never traced after the war.

Frank saw opportunity in the tragic fiasco of the Zamość Aktion. Emboldened by Hitler’s decision to retain him, the Governor General wrote to the Führer on 25 May 1943. He emphasized that he understood the urgency of the resettlement of ethnic Germans and that humanitarian considerations were irrelevant. Nonetheless, Frank questioned the advisability of carrying out the operation in wartime and criticized the methods used by the SS which,

he said, had caused ‘indescribable panic’ and a ‘chaotic situation’ as unrest spread to areas unaffected by the deportations. This in turn threatened the harvest. He therefore requested that Hitler clarify his authority over Krüger and the police. Initially, however, his efforts proved fruitless since Lammers merely forwarded the letter to Himmler. Undeterred, the Governor General tried again on 19 June with a lengthy analysis of the state of the GG which called for significant tactical changes. This did at least lead to a meeting with Himmler later in the month at which some form of understanding was reached. However, that this did not represent a fundamental change was evident from Himmler’s summary of their ‘common intentions’ in a letter to Frank of 3 July. Although the Reichsführer accepted that there should be ‘total cooperation’ between the police and the civil administration, this was in the context of continuing and expanding the Aktion into 1944, including further Germanization of Lublin itself and the possibility of resettlements in Galicia. It is thus plausible to argue that it was the situation on the Eastern Front and the deteriorating security situation inside the General Government rather than Frank’s opposition that terminated the Zamość Aktion. Furthermore, Himmler continued to hope that the campaign could resume. There was indeed resettlement in Galicia from 1943 onwards albeit not in the form originally envisaged, as ethnic Germans from Russia and the Caucasus fled from the advancing Red Army.[31]

Nonetheless, Frank’s position did appear to have been strengthened, notably through what was surely the least regrettable consequence of the Aktion – Himmler’s decision to remove Globocnik. Both Erich von dem Bach-Zelewski, the SS commander entrusted by Himmler with orchestrating the anti-partisan fight across eastern Europe, and Richard

Wendler, the Reichsführer's brother-in-law who had been appointed as the Lublin district governor in May, called for the dismissal of Globocnik, who was also facing another ongoing corruption investigation. He was therefore transferred in August 1943 to his home city of Trieste – where he took charge of a brutal campaign against Italian and Yugoslav partisans and the murder of local Jews – although not before overseeing the liquidation of the Białystok ghetto. Himmler had not lost his affection for his protégé, however, telling Wendler that Globocnik's 'errors' should not obscure his 'tremendous capacity for work and dynamism'. In response to a report from Globocnik in November 1943 which officially declared the end of Aktion Reinhard, Himmler thanked him for his 'great and unique services'.[32] Krüger too was withdrawn from the GG in October 1943, although whether this was a sop to Frank or, conversely, a punishment for Krüger's own growing reservations about SS policy is not clear. Frank did enjoy better relations with the new HSSPF, Wilhelm Koppe, but the latter was hardly a more moderate figure, having spent the previous four years spreading murder and terror across the Warthegau.

Frank treated the changing power balance in 1943 as a chance to redirect Nazi policy in the General Government. This was something he had been pushing for since at least the beginning of the year, reflecting his oft-expressed belief that the Germans needed to find a way to work with the Poles whilst the war continued. He had reacted enthusiastically in February 1943 when Goebbels issued a propaganda circular calling for a more positive approach to indigenous populations, only to be disappointed when it became clear that it was not intended to apply to the GG. A new chance to improve relations with the Poles was offered

by the discovery in the spring of the mass graves of the Polish officers murdered by the Soviets in Katyn forest. However, even this propaganda gift proved impossible to exploit fully, despite extensive media coverage. Prominent Polish citizens such as Archbishop Sapieha and RGO leaders were taken to inspect the massacre site but declined German offers to broadcast their views. In his letter to Hitler of June 1943, Frank noted that Katyn was not enough to win over the Poles and suggested a series of sensible measures including improving the population's material situation, expanding educational and cultural opportunities, more use of Polish manpower in the administration, and ending the resettlements. However, in the absence of support from Berlin this new course amounted in practice to little more than meagre increases in the food rations for 1943 and a different tone in propaganda, including some excruciating public appearances by the Governor General such as his gift of the watch to the millionth worker sent to the Reich.[33]

Even had more been offered, Frank was deluding himself in thinking that the Poles could be reconciled. One obstacle was the transparent insincerity of his strategy, as he frequently acknowledged to German audiences, most famously on 14 January 1944 when he justified a more conciliatory approach as a wartime necessity: 'Once we have won the war, then, as far as I am concerned, mincemeat can be made out of the Poles and Ukrainians and all the others hanging around here.' In any event, it was far too late to change Polish attitudes. In his letter to Hitler, Frank had listed a litany of reasons why German rule was hated – including starvation, deportation, exploitation and murder – yet he still appeared to believe that the Poles might be willing to forgive and forget.[34]

The 1942–3 period can indeed be seen as a turning point in German-Polish relations but in the sense that terror against the mass of the population actually increased, not only in the Zamość Aktion but also through the increasing brutality deployed in the fulfilment of food and labour quotas as well as in reprisals against the resistance movement which was growing due to these very same reasons. For all Frank's hope of a fresh start, the deteriorating security situation engendered by the policies of his regime increased his dependence on the SS and police, culminating in his issue on 2 October 1943 of a typically preposterously titled law – 'combating attacks against the German work of construction in the General Government' – which introduced the death penalty without trial for any violation of any German order.[35] This was no basis for reconciliation with the Poles in a mutual struggle against Bolshevism. Rather, the last 18 months of the GG's existence saw large areas of its territory increasingly plunged into chaos as resistance to German rule intensified.

Tragically, the growing anarchy in the General Government in this period was not merely manifested in conflict with the Nazis. A new wave of ethnic cleansing began in 1943 which – though in part an indirect consequence of German policy – was not perpetrated by the occupiers and instead eventually brought civil war to three of the GG's five districts. On 6 June 1943, the same day that he noted the killing of Germans in Siedliska, Klukowski reported 'horror stories' coming from the east where Ukrainian bands had initiated a murderous cycle.[36]

Ever since 1939, the Ukrainian far right had pinned its hopes on the Germans as a means of advancing its agenda. Even after the prospect of an independent West Ukraine had

been dashed with the incorporation of Galicia into the GG, both factions of the OUN had generally continued to work with the occupiers in a marriage of convenience which saw the establishment of proto-state institutions, notably the auxiliary police, and a change in the ethnic balance of the Kresy through the murder of the Jews and persecution of the Poles. Naturally, the Nazis had their own ambitions for the Ukrainian lands, as demonstrated by the expulsion of Ukrainians and settlement of Germans in the context of Generalplan Ost in the region around Himmler's headquarters near Zhytomyr in former Soviet Ukraine. Nonetheless, in the prewar Polish territories cooperation suited both sides.

However, Stalingrad brought a fundamental change in the attitudes of some radical Ukrainian nationalists, although this was not immediately obvious in Galicia. Indeed, Otto Wächter – who had moved from Kraków to replace Lasch as governor in 1942 – favoured a pro-Ukrainian line, culminating in the announcement in April 1943 of the formation of an indigenous SS detachment, to be known as the SS Galizien division. This produced an overwhelmingly enthusiastic response from leaders of civil society such as Metropolitan Sheptyts'kyi and Kubiiovych. As the latter put it, 'we remain the object and not the subject of the events unfolding around us. To improve our chance, our dream has been the creation of our own armed force.' Kubiiovych hoped that even if Germany lost, the division would serve as a 'national army' which could secure a Ukrainian state from the ashes of the Third Reich. So many men volunteered that tens of thousands had to be rejected. As it turned out, the division proved militarily useless when deployed against the Red Army in 1944 and was quickly smashed although not before committing atrocities against Galicia's Poles.[37]

However, whilst not opposing the creation of the SS Galizien, the leadership of the OUN-B had decided on a different strategy, based on the catastrophic miscalculation that, in a repeat of the First World War, the Germans and Soviets would destroy each other, leaving the field open for a showdown between Ukrainians and Poles for mastery of the Kresy. To prepare for this eventuality, they aimed to launch a pre-emptive strike to clear the region of its Polish population. Ironically, the Home Army leadership in Galicia, where Polish nationalism was especially strident precisely because Poles were a minority, had drawn similar conclusions, but it was only the OUN-B which envisaged ethnic cleansing on a mass scale.[38]

In spring 1943 Ukrainian auxiliary policemen in Wołyń (a former Polish province to the north of Galicia) deserted en masse, taking their weapons and training in mass murder with them, and joined the Ukrainian Insurgent Army (UPA). This organization had originated in 1942 as an independent partisan unit but it was taken over in the course of 1943 by members of OUN-B who used it as a vehicle to perpetrate ethnic cleansing – indeed genocide – across Wołyń. As German forces abandoned the countryside, UPA units murdered the entire populations of Polish villages (and many Ukrainians as well) in an attempt to frighten the remainder into fleeing. Estimates of the number of Polish civilians murdered in Wołyń in 1943 are in the range of 40,000–60,000.[39]

It was always likely that UPA violence would spread to the General Government, especially Galicia. The first attacks on the district's Poles took place in the late summer of 1943, using Polish reprisals in Wołyń as well as attacks on Ukrainians in the Lublin district as justification. However, it was in early 1944 that the murder wave truly reached

Galicia as UPA units surrounded villages. Poles increasingly abandoned their homes, taking refuge in churches which served as fortified outposts guarded by the Home Army. Some even found themselves hiding on farms with fugitive Jews, such as Samuel Drix who had escaped from Janowska. One of those encountered by Drix was a peasant named Czesnykowski from the predominantly Ukrainian village of Kawareczyzna Górna; even his Ukrainian wife had renounced him 'to save her life and her children's'. At the end of February, UPA forces took the fight to the very heart of Polish Galicia with the murder of dozens of young men on the streets of Lwów, prompting the AK to kill more than 100 Ukrainians in the city's suburbs. By April 1944, Ukrainians and Poles were killing each other in every Kreis in the district. Drix recalled the 'mass migration' which took place every night as both communities retreated to their strongholds: 'Poles or Ukrainians who stayed in their houses after dusk could pay with their lives.' Perhaps 20,000 Poles and several thousand Ukrainians lost their lives in the violence in Galicia.[40]

By this stage, the conflict had also spread to the original GG although it was a rather more balanced struggle given the very different ethnic composition. There was fighting in the Kraków district but the south of the Lublin district saw the bloodiest violence.[41] Even before the murders in Wołyń, relations in the district had been tense since many Poles had resented what they perceived as the 'treachery' of Ukrainians who had welcomed the Germans in 1939 and had gained increased representation in the local administration, especially around Chełm where there was a large Ukrainian population. This had resulted in hundreds of attacks on Ukrainian 'collaborators' by the underground. The situation had then been exacerbated by the Zamość

Aktion. Although Ukrainians had been expelled from the Zamość Kreis in the first wave, they had been transferred to vacated Polish farms around Hrubieszów. In the Wehrwolf stage, Globocnik aimed to concentrate Ukrainians (including those sent to Hrubieszów) in the Biłgoraj Kreis to the west to form the first line of defence against Polish partisans.[42] The Ukrainians often fled rather than serve as German pawns but the Polish resistance increasingly targeted their villages, leading to complaints from their leaders to the authorities that the Germans were failing to protect them.[43]

As thousands of Polish refugees from Wołyń and Galicia flooded into the district, conflict escalated. As early as October 1943, Klukowski was recording reports of murders of Poles in the Hrubieszów Kreis. A war zone developed in the south of Zamojszczyzna as units of the Peasant Battalions, many formed in response to the Zamość Aktion, and the Home Army fought against Ukrainians, who were reinforced by UPA troops from Wołyń and Galicia from spring 1944. By April, Klukowski was reporting that thousands were dying on both sides. Most were civilians. The nature of the conflict was graphically described by Waldemar Lotnik, a member of the Peasant Battalions, whose unit 'reacted to their attacks, which reached unspeakable levels of barbarity, with a ruthlessness of our own'. The violence rapidly evolved from the murder of men to the destruction of entire communities in a tit-for-tat process. 'Each time', recalled Lotnik, 'more people were killed, more houses burnt, more women raped', with teenagers on both sides 'the worst perpetrators of atrocities'. The victims of his unit also included 'Polish women who had slept with the enemy'; their fate is best not described.[44]

The conflict was only ended by the advance of the Red Army in 1944, denying both sides the decisive showdown

they had been seeking. Indeed, it could be argued that, counter to UPA expectations, the violence had facilitated Soviet control since it precluded any possibility of effective cooperation within the indigenous population against either the Red Army or the Wehrmacht. Ultimately, it instead formed what Lotnik termed a ‘blood-crazed sideshow to the main carnage in the east and the Jewish extermination’, a sideshow which cost the lives of perhaps more than 100,000 people in Wołyń and the GG, more than 80 per cent of them Polish, and whose effects would outlive the German occupation.[45]

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8
‘The blood of fighting Poland’ Resistance

On the morning of 20 April 1943, Hitler’s birthday, HSSPF Friedrich Wilhelm Krüger left his flat on the Wawel hill on his daily journey to his office in the GG headquarters to the west of Kraków’s city centre. At around 9.50 a.m., ‘two good looking, well dressed men sprang out of a shed’ and ‘threw two bombs which [...] exploded directly behind my car causing the right-hand rear wheel and tyre to be damaged and the petrol tank to leak’.[1] The police chief was unharmed but other servants of the regime were less fortunate. More than 300 gendarmes were killed in 1943, along with hundreds of Gestapo agents and informers as well as many members of the civil administration, including Kurt Hoffmann, the head of the Warsaw labour office.[2]

These assassinations of Germans, together with other acts of sabotage and the turmoil in Zamojszczyzna, prompted ever harsher reprisals which culminated in Frank’s aforementioned 2 October 1943 decree authorizing summary executions. The centre of both the underground’s attacks and the German repressions was Warsaw, where Franz Kutschera had been appointed by Himmler as the district’s SSPF in September. Kutschera, fresh from

murdering Belarusian peasants, ordered massive round-ups which began on 13 October. Ludwik Landau recorded on the next day that patrols were sweeping ‘throughout the city’. The principal targets were ‘men, especially young men, but there is no rule’: the Germans also took ‘old women and children from the streets and neighbouring houses’. As the diarist noted a day later, the arrested were ‘not in any way prominent personalities, [but] people encountered and seized randomly’. Thousands were shot in the following weeks in the ruins of the former ghetto, but on 16 October Kutschera’s men carried out the first of around 30 street executions. A typical example was the shooting of 20 people on Nowy Świat, Warsaw’s most elegant street, on 21 November. According to an eyewitness, the Germans ‘cleared the people not only from the streets, but also from the shops, stores and gateways’. Tenants of neighbouring buildings were forbidden to look out of their windows. Victims were then brought by truck from the city’s Pawiak prison: they ‘had their hands tied behind their backs, were blindfolded, and were handcuffed together in pairs. Apparently they had a kind of gag in their mouths, so that they were unable to shout.’ Once the execution was over, the street was cleaned by conscripted civilians, leaving ‘only a wet wall and a wet pavement’. Mourners flocked to these sites but they too were in danger, as on 23 October following the execution of 25 people by the Vistula. ‘Flowers and burning candles were to be seen,’ wrote a witness, ‘and also the corpses of two women and a school-boy, who were shot by the German outposts on the Poniatowski-bridge while putting flowers on the sand. The rest fled in panic.’ From the end of October onwards, placards were posted after each execution listing the names of the murdered together with those of other arrested people who had been

‘reprieved’ on condition of future good behaviour by the population. That such hostages were executed in the streets every few days for four months may be taken as an indication that the notices did not have the intended deterrent effect.[3]

This was hardly the new dawn in Polish-German relations that Hans Frank was supposedly seeking. Indeed, on 15 January 1944 the Governor General told NSDAP leaders in Kraków: ‘I have not been afraid to declare that when a German is shot, up to a hundred Poles will be shot.’ That night, he attended a performance of *Die Fledermaus*. Frank had a less pleasant evening two weeks later when he embarked on an overnight train journey to Lwów: at 11.17 p.m. on 29 January, 22 kilometres from Kraków, ‘a muffled explosion’ partially derailed his train. Frank was unhurt and proceeded to Galicia the next day by air instead, returning by the same method on 31 January. The wisdom of this decision was confirmed by HSSPF Koppe, who told the Governor General on 1 February that the return train had run into a mine. That same day, news arrived in Kraków that Kutschera had been assassinated in Warsaw in broad daylight at nine o’clock in the morning just yards from the police headquarters in the city. More than 1,000 Varsovians were murdered in the reprisals, although the street executions stopped on 15 February. Discussing Kutschera’s killing, Koppe noted that the underground was particularly targeting the SS and police, a point proven when he himself only narrowly avoided assassination in Kraków in July 1944.[4] No German, not even the most heavily guarded, was safe.

Resistance to German rule emerged from the very beginning of the occupation.[5] Indeed, the seeds of what would become the underground state were sown whilst the September

campaign was still in progress. As the siege of Warsaw drew to a close, Juliusz Rómmel, the commander responsible for the defence of the city, commissioned General Michał Tokarzewki-Karaszewicz to continue the fight. This was a self-conscious echo of the traditions of conspiracy and insurrection which Poland had developed during the partition era and which formed a central element of national culture, celebrated in literature and passed on in schools and through family tradition. Tokarzewski, described by his fellow conspirator Stefan Korboński as a 'born politician and a man of great personal charm and style', set about establishing an embryonic general staff and entered into talks with representatives of the major political parties, resulting in the formation of the Polish Victory Service (SZP) in October 1939. The aims of the SZP were to continue the struggle against the Germans until liberation and to establish a temporary government structure in the absence of the prewar regime whose leaders had fled the country. To this end, Tokarzewski worked with a political council representing the three principal parties: the Socialists (PPS), the vaguely leftist peasant-based People's Party (SL) and the right-wing National Party (SN). However, the General had to contend with a degree of suspicion from politicians such as Korboński (SL) who, despite their affection for him, distrusted the military given its role in the Sanacja government of the 1930s and were reluctant to accept any organization in which officers had the upper hand.[6]

Greater doubts were harboured by Władysław Sikorski, the former general and opponent of Sanacja who had emerged as prime minister of the government-in-exile in France. He sought a clean break with the pre-war system and feared an organization which had been created without his consent. In late 1939, therefore, Sikorski and his

ministers in Angers ordered the replacement of the SZP with a new military organization, directly accountable to them, to be known as the Union of Armed Struggle (ZWZ). Poland was divided into zones each with its own commander subordinate to Angers, thereby depriving Tokarzewski of overall leadership. Instead, he was appointed as commander of the Lwów region, a decision which Korboński and others suspected was a deliberate attempt to remove him: Tokarzewski was well known in what was his hometown, making him easily identifiable to the Soviets who indeed captured him when he attempted to enter Galicia in March 1940.[7] The divided structure was abolished after the fall of France, with command of the ZWZ falling to Stefan Rowecki (code name: 'Grot') who had been Tokarzewski's chief of staff in the SZP and then ZWZ commander of the Warsaw region. In theory, the ZWZ spanned the whole of former Poland but its activities were mainly concentrated in the General Government given the higher levels of repression to which Poles were initially subjected in the incorporated territories and the Soviet zone.

Even once the ZWZ was firmly established, it was only one of many resistance organizations. Hundreds of usually localized groups had emerged in the autumn of 1939, often based around prewar associations ranging from political parties to sports clubs. Tokarzewski had been able to form connections between the SZP and some units, notably a cell in Kraków under Tadeusz Bór-Komorowski, but many initially chose to stay outside of the SZP/ZWZ, not least because of antipathy towards the prewar government and army leadership who had further disgraced themselves in the eyes of most Poles with their flight in 1939. Both the government-in-exile and the ZWZ were largely untainted by

this legacy, yet suspicion of the military could not easily be dispelled. The incipient underground movement was further weakened by German repressions, especially of its political leadership which included the two most prominent victims of the AB-Aktion – Maciej Rataj (SL) and Mieczysław Niedziałkowski (PPS). Looking back on the early stages of the conspiracy, Korboński understood 'how careless and naive we were': most people 'remained in their prewar homes or returned to them from their war wanderings'.[8] Such behaviour reflected an underestimation of the ruthlessness of the opponent but perhaps also the widespread belief that the struggle would be short-lived given the almost universal trust in the goodwill and military power of the Western Allies. When such tragically misplaced faith was disabused in the spring of 1940, morale plummeted. 'We believed that France would save us and the whole world', wrote Wacław Śledziński in July 1940. Now, 'all our hopes, and as it would seem the whole world, have been overthrown'.[9]

In such circumstances, it became clear that the fight would be a lengthy one. The ZWZ – renamed the Home Army (AK) on Sikorski's orders in February 1942 – thus set about preparing itself for the struggle to come by recruiting, training and arming cadres for a future uprising. Weapons were secured via caches buried in 1939, capture from German troops, purchase on the black market, RAF air drops (from 1941), and manufacture in the AK's own workshops and surreptitiously by Polish workers in German factories.[10] An essential priority was to bring the many other underground groups under control, a long and arduous process which was never fully accomplished. Only the Socialists had immediately subordinated their party militia to the central leadership; those of the other two major

parties were only properly integrated into the AK in 1942–3. The most persistent problem proved to be the far-right, represented by the prewar National Radical Camp (ONR) whose factions maintained their own military units throughout the occupation. Indeed, when the National Party's militia was incorporated into the AK in late 1942, many of its members refused to submit and instead joined with ONR activists to create the National Armed Forces (NSZ) which remained independent of, and sometimes a physical threat to, the AK until the end even though some NSZ units joined the AK in 1944. Even more problematic in the longer term were the Communists, despite their pitiful levels of prewar support and the murder of most of their exiled leadership by Stalin during the Great Terror. Naturally, Communists were hardly at the forefront of resistance during the era of the Nazi-Soviet Pact but Barbarossa led to the creation of the Polish Workers' Party (PPR) in early 1942. The PPR leadership remained aloof from the central underground, reflecting their – and Stalin's – very different aims for Poland's future.[11] Nonetheless, by early 1944 the AK had probably more than 350,000 members, most of whom had been recruited since late 1942.

The evolution of the underground army was accompanied by that of underground state structures unparalleled in Nazi-occupied Europe.[12] The political council created with the SZP evolved in February 1940 into the Political Consultative Committee (PKP) which, despite occasional changes of name, remained the essential representative of the large parties, including in due course the centre-right Labour Party (SP) alongside the original three. Desire for a more formal arrangement led over the course of 1940 to the creation of the Government Delegacy, headed by the Government Delegate who was effectively prime minister,

or rather Sikorski's deputy in the homeland. The ZWZ/AK was officially subordinated to the Delegacy although in practice overlapping competencies existed, expressed in a plurality of acronyms which sometimes confused even leaders of the underground. There were also occasional tensions with the government-in-exile, which moved to London in 1940, and between and within parties, especially when it came to the National Party, whose democratic credentials were not entirely beyond reproach. Nonetheless, all concerned did generally try to cooperate and to make the underground state the basis of a renewed Poland. As Jan Karski put it, the underground 'broke away from [the] prewar track and returned to the still older traditions of Polish parliamentary democracy'. The Delegacy developed departments modelled on prewar ministries, often staffed by intellectuals such as Landau or Władysław Bartoszewski. The majority of the Delegacy's budget – provided by London as well as confiscations and donations – was spent on social activities, especially welfare and education, thereby sustaining the spiritual resistance to the Germans.[13]

Active military resistance was a rather different matter. Even in late 1939, Sikorski had made it clear that overt military action was out of the question, a strategy that was reinforced when the fall of France rendered open struggle with the Germans suicidal. Both the government-in-exile and the leadership in the GG stuck to this course even after a significant partisan movement emerged in 1942–3. The priority was rather to prepare for an armed insurrection at some future point when conditions were more favourable. 'Only one uprising can be staged', explained *Biuletyn Informacyjny* in April 1943, adding that 'such an uprising must be unquestionably successful. An unsuccessful uprising, ill prepared, declared at the wrong moment –

would be tantamount to drowning the country in blood.'[14] In the meantime, much of the underground's work focussed on the gathering and transmission of intelligence through agents such as Karski (who possessed what Bór-Komorowski termed an 'extraordinarily retentive memory').[15] This was accompanied by extensive propaganda work which was not only directed at the indigenous population. In Akcja-N, the underground produced fake periodicals and leaflets purporting to emanate from non-existent German resistance groups in an attempt to divide and to undermine the morale of the occupiers. Meticulous care was taken in this operation. As Karski explained, documents were issued representing different ideologies – 'the Catholic ethos, the traditions of German parliamentarianism, international labour solidarity, or individual liberty' – each 'written in scrupulous conformity with the tenets of its purported sponsors.' Akcja-N also produced fictitious ordinances, such as an order to factories to give workers the day off with full pay on 1 May 1942, which took in many Germans.[16]

On a military level, the underground focussed on sabotage and diversion, especially attacks on transport, although such actions were limited before 1942 for fear of provoking collective reprisals against the civilian population. In fact, much of the paramilitary activity was directed against Poles considered to be collaborators such as office-holders or Gestapo informants. The best-known victim was the actor Igo Sym, of Ukrainian and German ancestry but regarded as an assimilated Pole, who managed the Warsaw city theatre and worked with the Gestapo; he was assassinated in March 1941 by the ZWZ. In 1941 the Delegacy also created its own Directorate of Civil Resistance (KWC), headed by Korboński. The KWC – which was later merged with its military equivalent – was responsible for

issuing and enforcing guidelines on issues such as the food and labour quotas, social relations with the Germans, and the cinema boycott. It was linked to an underground court system – initially military courts from 1940, then also civil from 1942 – which passed sentences on those considered to have betrayed the nation or breached ethical norms, although only a relatively limited number of cases were dealt with during the war. The KWC also took over and coordinated the 'small sabotage' carried out by the likes of the youth group 'Wawer' (named after the site of the 1939 massacre). Activities included the painting of graffiti, letting off stink bombs in cinemas, and duplicating the '*Nur für Deutsche*' signs found in restaurants and theatres and placing them on lampposts.[17]

Before the Zamość Aktion, overt military opposition to German rule was more likely to come from those who had literally nothing left to lose. Major Hubal aside, the first major partisan units were formed in late 1941 by escaped Soviet POWs who fled to the forests of the Lublin district. Separately, the PPR called for armed struggle from the moment of its creation in early 1942, arguing – optimistically or mendaciously, depending on one's interpretation – that immediate military action could drive out the Germans. The real reason for this absurd proposition was that Stalin hoped to relieve the pressure on the USSR through attacks on the German rear. The Communists did indeed create People's Guard (GL) units in the spring of 1942 but their early operations ended in failure.[18] In fact, after the Soviet POWs, the earliest fighters to take to the forests tended to be Jews.

This rather challenges a prevailing stereotype of the Holocaust which was (and is) widely held by many Poles,

Jews and others. ‘Why didn’t we resist’, asked Ringelblum in October 1942, ‘when they began to resettle 300,000 Jews from Warsaw? Why did we allow ourselves to be led like sheep to the slaughter?’ Calek Perechodnik expressed similar thoughts on the liquidation of the Otwock ghetto, reflecting that 8,000 Jews should have been able to stand up to 200 Germans. He later related the story of a group of escapees from the ghetto encountered by a German gendarme who began shooting them. The policeman ran out of bullets so sent a Polish boy to the nearest police station to fetch more. The gendarme sat down and waited:

> What did the Jews do then? Did they throw themselves on him to avenge the death of their closest ones? They continued to lie down with their faces to the ground and waited, waited for more than half an hour for the supply of bullets.

This account was corroborated by a report in *Prawda*, the Catholic nationalist newspaper edited by Zofia Kossak-Szczucka, which, however, showed rather greater understanding of the context: the Jews had been ‘hiding in the woods like wild animals for several weeks, afflicted with hunger and cold, driven to the brink of despair’.[19]

There were many factors which inhibited Jewish resistance. In a perhaps more reflective moment, Ringelblum echoed *Prawda* in acknowledging the role of deprivation and psychological shock in sending thousands voluntarily to the deportation trains in Warsaw: these were people ‘who, driven by hunger, anguish, a sense of the hopelessness of the situation, had not the strength to struggle any longer’. He also noted ‘the fear that the whole community might have to pay for any act of resistance’. In

this context, it is important to remember that people did not have advance knowledge of Nazi intentions. During the pre-Barbarossa era, it seemed reasonable to assume that any resistance – to ghettoization, for example – would only have made things worse. Even after the first reports of murders in the USSR, Chełmno or even Bełżec, it was hard to properly absorb their implications since the idea that the Nazis would seek to kill every single Jew seemed unimaginable. 'It was difficult', explained Ringelblum, 'for normal, thinking people to accept the idea that on this globe it was possible for a government calling itself European to murder millions of innocent people.' As already noted, the Germans exploited this apparently rational interpretation by spreading rumours that only a portion of the community would be deported once the ghetto liquidations began. Tadeusz Pankiewicz, the Kraków ghetto pharmacist, noted the 'fanatic stubbornness' of the minority who believed, even after the June 1942 Aktion, 'that the deportations were the last act in the Jewish tragedy'. Pankiewicz also highlighted a key psychological element: 'deep in the heart of all glimmered, however weakly, the hope of survival.' Or as Waldemar Lotnik put it, each person 'harboured the thought that even if all the rest perished, he would be the one, by some mistake or quirk of fortune, to get away'.[20]

There was little uniquely Jewish about such reactions. For example, during the expulsion of Poles from Szczebrzeszyn in July 1943, Klukowski initially claimed that there was a 'big difference', compared to the deportation of the Jews. Whereas the Jews demonstrated 'complete resignation' in the face of relatively few policemen, the Polish men whose arrest he witnessed 'showed hatred towards the Germans' and had to be guarded by 'soldiers carrying machine guns'. However, when the majority of the town's Poles were

deported a week a later, he admitted that although ‘the number of soldiers and gendarmes present was very low’, within ‘a few hours almost everyone was at the marketplace’. As Klukowski acknowledged, though ‘men can go to fight in the forest’, for most people escape was simply ‘impossible’.[21] In truth, armed resistance was only ever an option for a minority, whether Polish or Jewish.

Nonetheless, as Lotnik noted, many Jews ‘did fight back when an opportunity presented itself, fighting like cornered tigers’. Indeed, underground political groups had never ceased operating even after the move to the ghettos. As Ringelblum put it, the parties held ‘their meetings practically in the open in public halls’ and ‘had even begun to debate and insult each other, as in the good old prewar days’. As on the Polish side, it proved impossible to fully reconcile these different groups. This was not merely an ideological question but also a generational one, with calls for more active struggle from members of the youth wings of Zionist and leftist parties generally rejected by their elders in the pre-Reinhard era. The spread of awareness of the killings in the USSR and Chełmno did lead to more concerted attempts to create united resistance movements in a number of ghettos but these were inhibited both by lack of support from the majority, who still feared reprisals, and by German arrests of suspected Communist activists and others across the GG in April 1942 which affected a number of ghettos including Warsaw and Częstochowa.[22]

It was Aktion Reinhard that served as what Ringelblum termed a ‘terrible awakening’, by making German intentions clear. Resistance was further facilitated by the fact that most of those left in the rump ghettos were young: with fewer family ties, there was less reason to fear the effects of collective reprisals. This was especially true in the Warsaw

ghetto where the Jewish Combat Organization (ŻOB) was established in the first week of the Great Aktion. Although the new movement took part in some minor attacks, there was little it could realistically achieve at this stage, not least since some of its leaders and weapons were seized by the Germans. Furthermore, it was only in the autumn of 1942 that the ŻOB was able to unite the majority of illegal organizations under its command and even then the right-wing Zionist Revisionists chose to remain separate, maintaining their own Jewish Military Union (ŻZW), much as the Polish far-right stayed outside the AK. ŻOB forces carried out attacks in late 1942 on Jewish policemen and Judenrat officials who were considered to have disgraced themselves during the deportations but the real turning point came in January 1943 when the Germans launched a new Aktion in the ghetto. The underground was taken by surprise – it was aware of the large concentration of German police in the city but assumed that this was purely in connection with a massive round-up of Poles which was under way – yet rapidly fought back, believing that the liquidation of the ghetto was in progress. Whilst the fighting exposed the ŻOB's lack of weapons and inexperience – 'we were novices', wrote Icchak Cukierman, one of the leading commanders – it nonetheless enabled tactical lessons to be drawn. More importantly, perhaps, the fact that the Aktion was short-lived was seen as a victory for the underground. The Germans had in fact only intended to carry out a limited deportation (around 5,000–6,000 were sent to Treblinka) but it was widely assumed that Jewish resistance had forced them to stop. With its support and prestige thus enhanced, the underground could prepare for the final showdown.[23]

When the Germans entered the ghetto on 19 April 1943 (the eve of Passover),[24] they were met with massive and

unanticipated opposition which quickly led them to change tactics, resorting to burning buildings from 21 April in an attempt to force the Jews out. By the end of the first week, German forces had seized control of the streets, but it took them a month to defeat the ŻOB and ŻZW fighters hidden in a labyrinth of bunkers and tunnels.[25] By the conclusion of the conflict, several thousand Jews had died in the ghetto whilst close to 7,000 were deported to Treblinka. The remainder were sent to labour camps in the Lublin district, chiefly Poniatowa and Trawniki where factories had been relocated from Warsaw. Beginning with the symbolic destruction of the Great Synagogue on 16 May, the territory of the ghetto was flattened over the next year or so, the rubble cleared by a group of foreign Jews brought from Auschwitz and interned in a small concentration camp on Gęsia Street. Of course, there was no hope that the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising could have defeated the Germans, although they did lose probably several dozen men and possibly hundreds were wounded.[26] Of greater importance, however, was the symbolic impact. This was the first major act of armed resistance by a civilian population anywhere in Nazi-occupied Europe and it was deeply embarrassing to the Germans – and instructive to the AK – that it took them so long to defeat a poorly armed opponent in the middle of a major European city. For the underground leaders themselves, the very fact of the uprising was their greatest achievement. As the ŻOB's chief commander Mordechai Anielewicz famously put it in a letter of 23 April, 'the dream of my life has come true. I've lived to see a Jewish defence in the ghetto in all its greatness and glory.'[27]

Anielewicz's comments illustrated the fundamental difference between the Jewish and Polish resistance movements. Believing themselves doomed anyway, the

ŻOB leaders saw insurrection as their only option, offering the chance of saving some lives by breaking out of the ghetto or, failing that, at least asserting dignity and defiance. By contrast, the AK could still realistically entertain hopes of final victory, a prospect which premature action might endanger. These contrasting perspectives – both entirely understandable – go some way to explaining the controversy regarding the question of whether the Polish underground could have done more to assist the uprising.[28] Contact was established between the two movements in the autumn of 1942 and intensified following the January fighting in the ghetto. The AK, whose own arsenals were limited, did supply a small number of weapons to the insurgents and made limited interventions in the fighting (as did the Communist GL), notably on the first day of the uprising when a small unit tried to blow a hole in the ghetto wall, revealing in the process the AK's own lack of battle experience. However, the two groups had ultimately different strategies. Although Sikorski broadcast to the homeland on 5 May, denouncing the 'greatest crime in human history' and calling on the Polish population to render 'all possible aid' to the Jews, he also cautioned Rowecki to ensure that the battle did not spread to become a Polish uprising since the time was not yet right. From the standpoint of the AK, this was a rational analysis. However, whilst Sikorski's motives could not be impugned, another factor was perhaps at play. On 23 April, the ŻOB issued an appeal to 'Poles, Citizens, Soldiers of Freedom'. Adopting the slogan of nineteenth-century Polish insurrectionists, it claimed to be fighting 'for your Freedom as well as ours' and celebrated 'the brotherhood of arms and blood of fighting Poland'. However, not every leader of the AK thought in such fraternal terms. This was not necessarily anti-Semitism

per se but a sense that the Home Army was the representative primarily of ethnic Poles, as in November 1942 when Rowecki had spoken of the possibility of action if the Germans attacked ‘our nation’ as they had the Jews. Even when praising the AK’s efforts to give help, Bór-Komorowski wrote after the war that the Jews ‘had undoubtedly been a foreign body within the Polish community’.[29]

Aktionen met with armed responses in a number of other cities, notably in the remnants of what had been the two largest ghettos after Warsaw. Resistance from prepared bunkers during the final liquidation in Lwów in June 1943 prompted the Germans to resort to what even Katzmann admitted were ‘brutal’ measures, including the demolition and burning of buildings. In Częstochowa there was a significant underground movement (also named ŻOB and linked to the Warsaw group) which made preparations for resistance. However, the liquidation Aktion in late June 1943 took it by surprise, meaning that only a few dozen members were able to fight the Germans from cellars or in the streets. In fact, sustained resistance inside a ghetto was only possible in Warsaw – no other ghetto was large enough to offer the networks of tunnels and bunkers which were used to such effect in the uprising. Different tactics were therefore preferred elsewhere. This including taking the fight to other areas of the city, most notably in Kraków where the underground (again ŻOB) carried out several attacks, including the bombing of the Cyganeria cafe in the Old Town in December 1942 which killed several Germans.[30]

The most common strategy was to seek to escape the ghetto to form partisan units, a process that began in the summer of 1942 as tens of thousands of Jews fled the Aktionen. Flight was usually spontaneous but, as Aktion

Reinhard evolved, underground groups made more organized attempts to transfer to the forests.[31] Most escapees were murdered in the *Judenjagd* but significant Jewish partisan groups did develop in the heavily wooded Lublin and Radom districts, although they continued to face many obstacles. Lacking arms and training, and initially in the absence of any other partisans beyond the scattered groups of escaped Soviet POWs, units sometimes also faced hostility from the local population. Samuel Gruber, who led a group in the north of the Lublin district, recalled that in one case 'the peasants set the church bell ringing to alert the Germans'. Such incidents eventually prompted Gruber's unit to move to the large Parczew forests north-east of Lublin which were the base of a group led by Yechiel Greenshpan that at one stage sheltered around 1,000 Jews in a 'family camp' similar to that of the better-known Bielski brothers over the border near Nowogródek.[32]

Samuel Gruber had taken to the forests after escaping from the Lipowa labour camp in Lublin, which was the site of several breakouts and acts of resistance, reflecting the fact that many of its inmates were Jewish POWs captured in 1939. Such incidents occurred in a number of other camps, although success was even less likely than in the ghettos. In some cases, inmates relied on knives, sticks and even their fists in desperate attempts to resist liquidation actions.[33] The most spectacular acts of defiance occurred in two of the extermination camps. Escapes from all three camps had occurred from the very beginning although almost all who fled were either killed or captured in subsequent Aktionen. The camp authorities also sought to inhibit flight through collective reprisals against prisoners who remained, although this was not an entirely effective deterrent given that all knew they were destined to be murdered anyway. As

the transports diminished in 1943, plans developed in both Treblinka and Sobibór for mass breakouts, given greater urgency as the exhumations and cremations drew to a close. Both plans called for the seizure of weapons in order to kill the Germans and take control of the camp, with the expectation that the Trawniki men would run away or succumb. In Sobibór, the prisoners sought to exploit the SS officers' greed by luring them to the barracks individually with the promise of goods found in the sorting of possessions. In neither instance were the plans fully realized since not all SS men were killed in Sobibór and possibly none in Treblinka, precluding the intended orderly escapes through the camp gate. Nonetheless, the two revolts – Treblinka on 2 August and Sobibór on 14 October 1943 – must be considered successes by any reasonable measure. In Treblinka, around 350–400 of the 850 inmates were able to break out although around 200 were subsequently caught and shot. In Sobibór, a larger number of the 700 prisoners got out of the camp but many died in the surrounding minefields. Toivi Blatt fell under a collapsing fence but 'this probably saved my life, for lying under the wires, trampled by the stampeding crowd, I saw mines exploding and bodies torn'. He was amongst around 300 who made it to the forests; 100 or so were then killed in the pursuit. Up to 100 of the around 400 successful escapees from the two camps survived to the end of the war.[34]

The uprisings, following that in Warsaw, contributed to Himmler's decision to accelerate the murder of the remaining Jews in the General Government, a process which reached a grotesque climax in the Erntefest ('Harvest Festival'). On 3 November 1943, Jews from labour camps across Lublin were marched to Majdanek to be shot in specially dug pits whilst 20 miles to the east the same fate

simultaneously befell the inmates of Trawniki, where the labour camp existed alongside the auxiliary police training camp. The next day, the butchers of Majdanek descended on Poniatowa to murder its 14,000 prisoners. Only two people are known to have survived the Poniatowa massacre to the end of the war. One was Ludwika Fiszer, a hairdresser from Warsaw who was in the camp with her 12-year-old daughter:

> we lay down quickly to avoid looking at the dead bodies. My daughter asked me to cover her little eyes, because she was afraid, so I put my left hand around her head, and with my right hand I held her right hand and so we lay, faces down. In a moment shots were fired in our direction; I felt my left hand burn.

Ludwika, only wounded, stayed in the pit for hours until twilight came: 'My first glance was at my daughter. [...] I touched her hair and back with my lips and her hand slipped out from mine.'[35]

Up to 42,000 Jews, the greatest number deportees from Warsaw, were shot in the Lublin district on these two days in the largest massacre of the Holocaust. In Szebnie, a labour camp in the Kraków district, more than 2,000 Jews were murdered on the same day as the Poniatowa massacre whilst killings took place in the next fortnight across the GG. In the middle of the month, there was a major Aktion in Płaszów whilst the last Jews of Janowska – who had been deployed burning corpses outside the camp around Lwów – were murdered on 19 November, although some were able to escape after killing their guards. Thereafter, aside from a few hundred in a handful of camps in the eastern districts and the concentration camp in Warsaw, the only Jews legally

left alive in the entire GG were concentrated in Płaszów and the factory camps of the Radom district.[36]

By the time of the Erntefest, the state of the partisan movement had changed radically. ‘All of the forests are now in the hands of the underground’, wrote Klukowski in June 1943. It was the Zamość Aktion more than any other event that stimulated the emergence of Polish partisans, another indication that those with least to lose were most likely to engage in active military resistance. Indeed, as Bór-Komorowski admitted, this was ‘spontaneous self-defence’ rather than an initiative of the Home Army. The AK did send units to Zamojszczyzna in 1943 but most fighters in the region were members of the People’s Party’s Peasant Battalions (BCh). As Waldemar Lotnik explained, ‘they were the only Polish partisans under arms in the immediate area’. The BCh were at least officially linked to the Home Army through their party and were eventually officially subordinated to it. However, the 1943–4 period also saw the growth of significant combat groups outside the structures of the underground state. The far-right NSZ had a particularly significant concentration of forces in the Radom district, a prewar nationalist heartland, whilst the Communist People’s Guard – renamed the People’s Army (AL) in early 1944 – became an increasingly important factor in the forests of the Lublin district due to supplies from the USSR and the arrival of Soviet partisan groups from the Kresy from late 1943 onwards.[37]

The partisans increasingly carried the fight to the Germans, whose response was not always heroic. Bronisław Schatten recalled that in the Kraków district some German estates chose a policy of non-resistance – security personnel locked ‘themselves up in their rooms and let the partisans

rummage around wherever they wanted'. In Szczebrzeszyn, a New Year raid on the train station in 1943 brought no response since 'the gendarmes were completely drunk and ignored all calls'. By May, Klukowski was recording numerous partisan attacks on the Germans. He noted the diversity of the assailants – amongst them 'units of the Home Army, well-armed Soviet partisans, people's battalions [i.e. the BCh], and even small independent groups' – who were engaged in combat against not only the occupiers but also 'sometimes even themselves'. These latter clashes were in part the result of competition over scarce resources such as weapons and food, but they also reflected ideological tensions. This was less true of the Peasant Battalions who, as Lotnik explained, 'cooperated with both the Communists and the nationalists', but the NSZ and sometimes the AK actively fought the pro-Soviet groups. Jewish units too were attacked in places, often driving them closer to the Communists (not always immune to anti-Semitism themselves) and thereby reinforcing the *Żydokommuna* myth.[38]

Overt prejudice was not the only factor at work here. Just a month after the liquidation of the Szczebrzeszyn ghetto, Klukowski was reporting that 'several Jews' were 'active with the bandits'. What this actually meant very much depended on one's perspective. The partisan units formed by Soviet POWs, Jews or Communists tended to have limited support from rural populations, especially as they were usually the earliest groups to emerge, at a time when the countryside had yet to turn against the Germans as fully as the cities had. The partisans thus resorted to theft or intimidation in their search for arms or provisions, as in the case of Samuel Gruber's men who 'had to administer a few good beatings to those peasants before we could get any weapons at all'.

What the partisans saw as self-preservation naturally looked rather different to the villagers. This is not to say that outright criminality did not exist, as numerous armed gangs, usually peasants, roamed the countryside. A teenager from Czeberaki in the Lublin district recalled that bandits 'took clothing, shoes, even children's shoes, food, pigs, but most of all they wanted money and vodka'. Bór-Komorowski became so concerned about the 'terrible plague' of 'wild bands' that he issued an order in the autumn of 1943 for their selective liquidation, which some local AK commanders perhaps chose to interpret as an order to attack Jews and Communists.[39]

Genuine banditry proved hard to control, however. On 4 March 1944, Klukowski returned to a recurring theme of his diary – the constant attacks taking place, some of which were 'organized by different partisan units'; however, others were carried out 'by individuals for their own profit.' The problem was that it was often difficult to tell the two apart. Lotnik recalled the case of Baron, a Polish boy who fled to the forests with his Jewish girlfriend and her brother after her parents were arrested. They stole food from local Ukrainian peasants, killing those who resisted. The Germans, and perhaps others, 'might have thought of Baron as a common criminal rather than a partisan as he disguised his assassinations as robberies. For me, he was a Robin Hood of the Polish Resistance.' Indeed, it was frequently possible to be simultaneously a hero of the underground and an amoral delinquent given the exigencies of partisan life and the habitual exposure to violence. Partisans of all ideological stripes were capable of perpetrating terrible crimes against civilians and each other.[40]

Even military operations could be morally ambiguous given the dangers they posed to civilians, both directly – in

the form of train derailments, for example – and through the threat of collective reprisals. It was this latter fear which had particularly held back the Home Army but from 1942 it increased its sabotage operations, as in Operation Wreath (*Wieniec*) in October when train lines around Warsaw were blown up, temporarily paralysing transports to the Eastern Front.[41] In late 1942 existing sabotage groups were brought under the Directorate of Diversion (Kedyw), which additionally carried out the assassination of Germans such as Kutschera as well as the sentences of the underground courts. 'We are still afraid of the Germans,' wrote Klukowski in May 1943, 'but now the Germans are afraid of us.' Two months later, he recorded that German soldiers were not allowed on the streets of Szczebrzeszyn after dark and even in daylight had to walk in pairs.[42]

One reason for the underground's increasing boldness was that restraint had clearly not prevented indiscriminate terror against the civilian population. German violence nonetheless intensified as resistance grew. In January 1943 Himmler ordered a new Sonderaktion against supposed 'asocial elements' or 'proletarian types' who were to be sent to concentration camps in sufficiently large numbers that the underground would be weakened and deterred. In the week from 15 January around 20,000 people were arrested, especially in Warsaw (it was this operation which had led the ŻOB to assume that the ghetto would not be attacked). However, as Landau noted, the arrests were carried out 'in the same arbitrary and inexplicable way' as usual. At an angry meeting in Warsaw on 25 January which also discussed the Zamość Aktion, the civil administrators complained that they had not been consulted and that the victims were not 'asocials' but simply, in Governor Fischer's words, people seized 'on the street, from the cinemas, from

churches and houses'. Even Krüger admitted that mistakes had been made. Little changed, however. Klukowski recorded an incident in Józefów in March 1943 when two arrested AK officers were liberated from the police station. In retaliation, the sister and elderly parents of one of the men were executed in view of the town's population and 60 other people were arrested.[43]

The Germans did inflict some defeats on the underground in 1943. The Government Delegate Jan Piekałkiewicz was arrested by the Gestapo in February and died in Pawiak prison later in the year. An even greater blow was the arrest of the AK commander Rowecki on 30 June, marking the beginning of the 'black week' in which Sikorski died in a helicopter crash in Gibraltar on 5 July. The AK considered attempting to liberate Rowecki but discovered he had been taken to Berlin. June also saw Himmler's designation of the whole General Government, along with large areas of the rest of eastern Europe, as a 'bandit combat zone', bringing anti-partisan actions which extended beyond the Wehrwolf campaign, to the Parczew forests in particular.[44]

However, the limited impact of the repressions was illustrated by the fact that Frank felt compelled to issue his October summary execution decree. Kutschera's tactic of posting lists of victims and hostages, replicated across the GG,[45] only escalated the process of reprisal and counter-reprisal. In some localities, the German authorities did try to reach an accommodation with sections of the underground in an attempt to form a common front against 'bandits' and Communists, but this generally proved fruitless although units of the NSZ maintained contacts with the Security Police in the Radom district.[46] In any event, by the time most such efforts were launched, in late 1943 and early

1944, neither the Germans nor the underground were masters of the situation.

The underground had always planned for a general insurrection when, and only when, it became clear that both the Wehrmacht and German morale were collapsing. However, this strategy had been complicated by the entry of the USSR into the war since it was always then likely that any German defeat would see the arrival of the Red Army, not a prospect welcomed by most Poles especially after Stalin broke off diplomatic relations with the government-in-exile following the Katyn revelation in 1943. Rowecki and Sikorski had thus begun to shift from the concept of a simultaneous national uprising to a strategy of staggered local revolts beginning in the Kresy, but their deaths meant that the crucial decisions were left to their perhaps less capable successors. In October 1943 the London government sent instructions to Bór-Komorowski, who had replaced Rowecki, which left open the options of launching an insurrection or merely increasing sabotage, depending on the military and political circumstances. In the most likely scenario, a Soviet invasion without a resumption of diplomatic relations, the government-in-exile ordered that the AK should heighten its diversionary activities but then return underground on the arrival of the Soviets, an idea which was badly received in the homeland. In response, Bór-Komorowski developed a plan, code named Burza (‘Tempest’), in November which broadly followed the government-in-exile’s guidelines in that, should a general rising prove impractical, local units were to be mobilized to fight the retreating Germans. The crucial difference, however, was that Home Army and civil commanders were to reveal themselves to the Red Army, essentially acting as

‘hosts’ and thereby asserting Polish claims.[47] In the meantime, political preparations for the post-liberation period saw the establishment in January 1944 of the 17-member Council of National Unity, representing most democratic political parties along with the church and the cooperatives, which served as a quasi-Parliament alongside the government structures of the Delegacy. In March, the Council issued a manifesto entitled ‘What the nation is fighting for’, setting out its plans for a democratic and egalitarian Poland which retained its prewar eastern borders.[48]

By this stage, Burza had begun after the first Red Army units had crossed the prewar Polish-Soviet frontier in early January 1944 to enter Wołyń. The operation saw reasonable cooperation, partly facilitated by the common anti-UPA as well as anti-German fight. However, the fatal weakness of Burza was that its successful implementation was entirely at the mercy of the military fortunes and attitudes of the USSR, as shown when the fighting finally properly reached the GG in the summer (the Red Army had occupied the eastern tip of Galicia in March). The assault on Lwów began in early July whilst Soviet forces crossed the Bug on 20 July to enter the Lublin district. In both cases, the AK worked with the Red Army and contributed to the successful capture of the district capitals by the end of the month. However, in a pattern that was replicated in the Wilno and Nowogródek regions to the north-east of the GG, Home Army soldiers were then disarmed and many of their fighters arrested by the NKVD. A similarly clear indication of Soviet intentions was the establishment in Chełm (the first major city in the original GG to be liberated) of the Polish Committee of National Liberation (PKWN), a provisional government made up of Communists and fellow travellers flown in from

Moscow, on 22 July.[49] News of these developments reached Warsaw only gradually, but the unambiguous direction of Stalin's policy was a major factor in the fateful decisions then taken by the underground's leadership.

The Burza plan had excluded action in the major cities to spare the civilian population. Indeed, since the spring the AK had been sending weapons out of Warsaw to its units in the east. As late as 14 July, Bór-Komorowski informed London that, whilst it might be possible to revive the plans for a general uprising, fighting in the city would entail prohibitive losses. However, under pressure from some senior officers, he changed his mind a week later. The AK leadership had convinced itself that Germany's defeat was imminent, an impression reinforced in the following days by a German exodus from Warsaw and the rapid advances of the Red Army. The other precondition for an insurrection contained in the earlier plans – evidence of Germany's internal collapse – also appeared to be met with news of the July Bomb Plot. However, Bór-Komorowski's initial decision came when the Red Army was still more than 100 kilometres away. It also came before the emergence of the PKWN and the arrests of AK fighters in Lublin and Lwów, but political factors nonetheless played a vital role. In particular, the underground leadership in Warsaw was well aware of the parlous position of the government-in-exile, which had effectively been abandoned by Britain and the USA in its attempts to resist Stalin's demands for Soviet retention of the Kresy and influence over the composition of any postwar government. It was thus hoped that Polish bargaining power would be strengthened if Warsaw were in AK hands when the Red Army arrived. A further issue was the reputation of the underground. 'National dignity and pride required that the capital should be liberated by the Poles themselves',

wrote Korboński. Bór-Komorowski agreed that ‘the population would have considered a passive attitude a betrayal’. Essentially, the underground feared that it might be robbed of its last chance to prove itself in the eyes of the civilian population. The AK’s role in Burza in the east had been obscured by the central fact that it was the Red Army which had defeated the Germans, especially in the Lublin district where the partisans had been weakened by two major German sweeps in May and June. Indeed, Soviet and PPR propaganda goaded the underground in the days immediately before the rising by accusing the AK of cowardice and calling on Varsovians to resist the Germans. Posters even appeared in the city claiming that Bór-Komorowski and the Government Delegate Jan Stanisław Jankowski had fled.[50]

Although the course was fundamentally set from 21 July, the questions of when and how an uprising would begin remained in doubt until the last moment. However, irresistible pressure appeared to be developing, even after it became clear that the Germans were planning to stay and fight. With the sound of the Soviet bombardment drawing ever closer, the AK leadership learned of the establishment of the PKWN, the post-Burza arrests in the east, and the news from London that the prime minister Stanisław Mikołajczyk was flying to Moscow for talks with Stalin. Even so, the AK’s commanders remained split over timing when they met on 31 July until reports arrived that Soviet tanks had been spotted entering Praga, the area of the city across the Vistula. Such rumours proved to be premature but were enough to persuade Bór-Komorowski that the time had come, even though some officers continued to disagree. Believing that the Red Army was about to begin its assault, he sought to perform a delicate balancing act. As he later

put it, action ‘had to occur early enough to allow us to influence the course of events’ whilst avoiding the ‘tremendous danger a premature rising would invite’.[51] It would soon be clear that he had made a tragic miscalculation.

The largest urban insurrection of the Second World War began officially at 5 p.m. on 1 August 1944 when, in Bór-Komorowski’s words, ‘thousands of windows flashed as they were flung open. From all sides a hail of bullets struck passing Germans.’[52] The scale of the Warsaw Uprising undoubtedly caught the Germans off their guard. Although the AK failed to take its key strategic targets, it gained control of many areas of the city and had symbolically important successes such as the liberation of the Jewish inmates of the Gęsia concentration camp. However, the Germans proved to be rather more resilient than expected, in itself a disaster for the AK whose strategy was based on the assumption that the fighting would last for a week or so at worst. Although the Home Army initially had an advantage in manpower, it lacked the weapons for a prolonged fight and German reinforcements soon arrived.

The tide began to turn as early as 4 August, with immediately catastrophic consequences. As German forces advanced into the western Wola district on the following day, SS units – notably Dirlewanger’s brigade of psychopaths – carried out indiscriminate killings on Himmler’s orders. Buildings were combed and all inhabitants taken to a number of central locations. One of the main murder sites was the Ursus factory, where more than 5,000 people were shot. One of the few survivors was a pregnant woman, whose testimony carried tragic parallels with that of Ludwika Fiszer in Poniatowa:

> There were about 20 people in our group, mostly children of 10 to 12. There were children without parents, and also a paralysed old woman whose son-in-law had been carrying her all the time on his back. [...] I held my two younger children by one hand, and my elder boy by the other. The children were crying and praying.

Her murdered children were aged 12, 6 and 4. The woman, whose husband was presumed lost in the uprising, gave birth to a boy two weeks later.[53] Up to 40,000 people died in these massacres. Von dem Bach-Zelewski, Himmler's anti-partisan specialist who had been given command of German forces, ordered an end to such murders that evening, realizing that they only strengthened the moral authority of the underground and the will to resist, but the Germans continued to wear down the city by other means.

By the end of the first week, the AK-held sections of the city had been cut into three main zones and the rising's fate had been more or less sealed. German commanders continued to complain of difficulties and exhaustion but their situation was nothing compared to the plight of the Polish soldiers and civilians, especially those trapped in the Old Town which was under siege from mid-August. The early days of the uprising had resembled what one AK fighter termed 'a continuous holiday', as people celebrated a freedom they had not tasted for almost five years.[54] However, they found themselves increasingly driven to cellars where they lacked water, electricity and adequate sanitation. Morale began to decline from late August and criticism of the AK leadership and government-in-exile was increasingly voiced. Paradoxically, the rising may even have facilitated one of the very things it was intended to prevent

– support for the Communists, not out of conviction but simply the realization that only the USSR could possibly have saved Warsaw.[55]

That it did not has been a subject of intense controversy ever since 1944. It is now accepted that the failure of the Red Army to launch the assault expected by the AK was the result of military setbacks on the eve of the uprising. Nonetheless, even if this was not a conscious act of malice, a quality in which Stalin was hardly lacking, the agony of Warsaw brought him advantages. In particular, it reduced Mikołajczyk, whose position was meant to have been strengthened by the rising, to a supplicant during his talks in Moscow in early August. The prime minister was forced into concessions in the hope of securing Soviet aid, yet even then Stalin failed to act on plans suggested by General Rokossovsky for localized attacks; he also refused American requests to use air bases in Ukraine.[56] There were RAF flights from Italy in the first half of August but they suffered heavy losses.

In fact, when the Soviets finally did intervene, their actions only prolonged the tragedy. By early September, the AK's supplies of weapons and food were almost exhausted and Bór-Komorowski made it clear to London that Allied help was essential. The reply – that air attacks were impossible for the time being – came on 8 September, a day that also saw the evacuation of several thousand civilians under the terms of a temporary truce proposed by von dem Bach. On 9 September the Government Delegate Jankowski therefore informed London that 'Warsaw has fallen', only for the underground's plans to surrender to be abandoned when Soviet planes were spotted that same day; the Red Army's attack on Praga finally began a day later. By 14 September, the Soviets had advanced to the Vistula's east bank from

where Zygmunt Berling, the commander of pro-Soviet Polish forces accompanying the Red Army, ordered units to cross the river to link up with the AK. However, Berling's troops – who may have been dispatched without Soviet approval – were unable to turn the tide. The same was true of the USAF's mission on 18 September, after Stalin had finally allowed the use of airfields: although more than 100 planes dropped more than 1,000 containers of supplies, most fell in German-controlled areas. Nonetheless, the encouragement offered by these interventions persuaded the AK leadership to hold out, only for them to then see a decline in Soviet activity. Negotiations finally began on 29 September, producing an agreement that the civilian population be allowed to leave from 1 October. The surrender was signed on the evening of 2 October.[57]

Up to 200,000 Varsovians – including around 15,000 AK fighters – died in the uprising, the largest loss of life in the history of the General Government after Aktion Reinhard and the murder of Soviet POWs. The underground fighters, granted combatant rights by the Germans in a major concession, were mostly sent to POW camps whilst hundreds of thousands of civilians were filtered through transit camps. Most were scattered across the GG but around 90,000 were sent to the Reich for labour and 60,000, in a violation of the surrender agreement, to concentration camps.[58] One of the last citizens to leave was Samuel Willenberg, who survived both the Treblinka and Warsaw uprisings, fighting in the latter as an AK soldier. His miraculous survival continued when, knowing his fate if the Germans discovered his Jewish identity, he jumped from a train to the main transit camp in Pruszków. Willenberg described the city in October 1944 as a 'cratered moonscape littered with the burnt-out skeletons of

buildings’. In the months that followed even these skeletons disappeared as, on the orders of Hitler and Himmler, the city was almost completely destroyed. Virtually the only people left in Warsaw in this period were a few hundred other Jews hiding in the ruins, Władysław Szpilman amongst them. ‘There was not a single intact building as far as the eye could see’, wrote Szpilman, only ‘mounds of rubble’. It was easy to become ‘entangled in a confused mass of ripped telephone wires and tramlines, and scraps of fabric that had once decorated flats or clothed human beings now long since dead’.[59]

The debate on the wisdom of the rising began immediately and has continued ever since. Czesław Miłosz described it as ‘a blameworthy, lightheaded enterprise’ whilst Władysław Anders, the commander of the Polish army in Italy (who knew Soviet terror better than most), denounced it as a ‘crime’. Adam Bień, one of the political leaders of the rising, reflected in 1994 that it ‘was futile and so were all of the sacrifices’.[60] This illustrates that, in contrast to the other Warsaw insurrection, the AK’s leaders had a choice. Inaction would perhaps have been humiliating yet would also have spared lives, whereas the ghetto faced near certain death whatever happened.

However, such judgements naturally carry the wisdom of hindsight. There can be little doubt that Józef Garliński, the AK’s security chief who survived Auschwitz to become a notable historian of the underground, was correct when he described the entire five-year fight as ‘almost a complete failure, both politically and militarily’. Stefan Korboński, another underground leader turned historian, even mused in the 1950s that ‘legitimate doubts may arise about whether the decision to carry on the struggle, taken so readily [in 1939], was right, whether it was worth while to shed so

much blood for such meagre results'.[61] Nonetheless, both men were right to note that the failure was due to circumstances beyond their control, regardless of the correctness or otherwise of the decision to begin the uprising. After all, the final defeat of the Polish resistance was not inflicted by the Germans in Warsaw in 1944. That an underground movement of unprecedented scope – extending in the GG far beyond the military and politics – was crushed ultimately said more about the liberators than the liberated.

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9
‘Herr Roosevelt’s list’
Collapse

‘The Herr Governor General leaves the castle with a motorcade in the most magnificent winter weather and bright sunshine.’ With these words, Hans Frank’s official diary described his departure from the Wawel on 17 January 1945, the same day that the Red Army finally captured the ruins of Warsaw. His flight followed a stream of reports delivered on the previous day amidst ‘repeated air raids and bombing’ which brought, as his press chief delicately put it, ‘not very good news’. On the morning of 17 January, Frank was told that Soviet tanks had broken through German defensive positions a few miles north of Kraków and that he must leave immediately. Bronisław Schatten, who witnessed the headlong retreat from the city, was reminded ‘of our escape in 1939 magnified ten-fold’ as Germans left by every available form of transport. Those who could not find a vehicle went on foot, ‘dragging suitcases behind them through the snow. Soldiers, civilians, women, children, all were running – not walking, but actually running down the road.’[1]

Frank’s convoy, laden with documents and artworks, arrived at the manor house of Count Manfred von

Richthofen in Seichau in Silesia on 18 January. There Frank received the news of the death of his father, but he had other matters on his mind during his week-long stay. On 21 January he and his associates burned ‘the greater part’ of the files brought from Kraków, but they otherwise indulged simpler pleasures. Ever since the designation of the castle in August 1944 as the evacuation point for Frank and his staff, large transports had arrived regularly from Kraków. As von Richthofen explained, they had initially brought ‘mainly art treasures for storage, later, however, also a large quantity of foodstuffs and alcohol’. These stocks were suitably diminished by Frank and his men. The local leader of the Nazi welfare organization noted that they ‘were mostly drunk’; an inebriated collision with the gateway caused ‘large cases of rationed foodstuffs to fall into the mud, together with hundreds of cigars – the aforementioned gentlemen simply drove on and just left the said articles lying there.’ Things were no better in the house. ‘Wine and schnaps bottles, cigarette ends, bread and sausage lay around everywhere’, recalled Liselotte Freund, one of the servants. An inventory of the articles left behind included 14 typewriters, three cases of cutlery, a room full of artworks, an armoured Mercedes, ‘about 20 car rugs of various sizes’ and a deck chair.[2]

Frank proceeded from Seichau to Neuhaus, a small town by the Schliersee in Bavaria which was within walking distance of his only remaining residence. Rather than be with his family, however, he chose to establish a new HQ for the General Government in the town’s modest Cafe Bergfrieden. Here Frank received occasional visitors and engaged in an unwelcome correspondence with Berlin regarding the numerous complaints which had arisen from his stay in Seichau. He also paid regular visits to Lilly, under

whose influence he again appeared ready to separate from Brigitte. However, on his last journey to his mistress in mid-March, Frank had been forced to travel partly on foot, an indication that even this remote Alpine outpost of the Wawel could not escape the war forever. On 4 May he was arrested by the Americans, still at the coffee table, with his secretary (and other mistress) Helene K. His diaries were also seized, along with the Leonardo and other stolen artworks which Frank had hung in the cafe, although the Raphael was never recovered.[3]

The Governor General's inglorious bacchanalian flight had been preceded by similar scenes across his domain over the course of the previous year. Almost a year to the day before the evacuation of Kraków, Klukowski had noted the convoys of Germans passing through Szczebrzeszyn as they fled from the Soviet territories to the east. However, it was in the summer of 1944 that the exodus of the GG's Germans truly began with the simultaneous advances of the Red Army through the Galicia and Lublin districts. The last civil administrators left Szczebrzeszyn on 19 July, having spent their final hours in the town 'drinking heavily and shooting'.[4]

Despite these setbacks, Frank continued to make plans for the General Government in line with his celebrated 'new course'. However, this largely continued to consist of firing off memos to Berlin to little effect. On 5 October 1944 he telexed Hitler to suggest that, given the Warsaw Uprising and the state of the war, the time had come to fundamentally recast relations with the Poles by giving them a greater role in the administration. Clearly excited, he instructed Bühler on 16 October to communicate his 'new Polish policy' to Himmler, Lammers, Bormann and others. However, by mid-November he had to confess to HSSPF

Koppe that neither Hitler nor Himmler had replied, although he asserted his willingness to act independently should the need arise. Naturally, it never did.[5]

In reality, terror remained the principal method of German rule. Indeed, on 16 October Frank had followed his discussion with Bühler regarding his apparently pro-Polish policy with a meeting and lunch with Oskar Dirlewanger. The Governor General offered the butcher of Wola 'his thanks and his appreciation for the exemplary action of his combat group in the fight in Warsaw'. Even before the uprising, in late June, Koppe had ordered reprisal actions against the families of underground members, with men to be killed and women sent to camps. During the insurrection, Walther Bierkamp, the chief of the GG's Security Police, issued instructions for the preventative arrest of thousands of men in the Kraków and Radom districts who were to be shot should unrest spread. The Radom Sipo objected to this order, citing lack of resources and political dangers, and in any event a rising outside Warsaw never materialized. Nonetheless, the stabilization of the front for several months facilitated large-scale anti-partisan actions in the Radom district accompanied by mass arrests in the cites, in which the Wehrmacht – concentrated in the west of the GG following its retreat – played a prominent role.[6]

The General Government's remaining Jews were not spared. The few surviving small labour camps in the Lublin district had been liquidated prior to the Red Army's advance, concluding with the murder of a work commando, along with Polish prisoners, in Lublin castle on 22 July just hours before the Soviets entered the city. Two days earlier, Bierkamp ordered the evacuation of all Jews from the remaining camps across the GG, which still contained perhaps up to 70,000 forced labourers. Most camps were

liquidated in the next two months, with their inmates sent to Auschwitz or concentration camps in the Reich proper after selections in which the ‘unfit’ were shot on the spot. However, although a great many of the deportees died in Auschwitz in the following months or in the subsequent death marches, the fact that they were transported so late, and after selections had already taken place, meant that they had a somewhat higher chance of survival. In Częstochowa, Jewish forced labour camps attached to a group of HASAG factories existed until January 1945. Although many inmates were then deported, a few thousand were still in the city when it was liberated.[7]

The Nazis were not only concerned with living Jews. ‘Strange things are going on at the Jewish cemetery’, reported Klukowski on 13 July 1944. He learned on the next day that the bodies of the Jews murdered in October 1942 were being exhumed and taken by truck to the Rotunda fortress in Zamość for cremation. The operation was completed on 16 July, three days before the German departure from Szczebrzeszyn. What the doctor was recording was just one small portion of Aktion 1005, a massive operation to destroy the evidence of Nazi crimes in eastern Europe which had already been under way for two years. The programme had begun at Chełmno in the Warthegau before being extended to the three Aktion Reinhard camps from the autumn of 1942. An initial impetus had been fears of infection of the water supplies used by the Germans but the turn in the war made the issue more urgent, not least after their own discovery of the Katyn graves showed the dangers of inadequate concealment. Janowska was next: in mid-1943 a group of prisoners, amongst them Leon Weliczker, was selected to begin burning the tens of thousands of corpses buried next to the

camp. Weliczker was able to keep a secret diary in which he recorded the brigade's gruesome labours. Even now, the Nazi lust for Jewish possessions remained unabated: the guards offered 'butter, salami, eggs, vodka, cigarettes, and anything that we need' in return for 'the gold sifted from the ashes of the dead.' After more than two months in the Piaski ravine, Weliczker's group was moved to other sites around Lwów, where tens of thousands more victims were cremated. In October 1943, the brigade discovered the bodies of what were evidently 'very important people', some of them 'buried in tuxedos' – they were the Lwów professors murdered in July 1941.[8]

As the Red Army advanced, Koppe issued orders for Aktion 1005 to be carried out across the General Government, hence the strange goings on in Szczebrzeszyn. Following the Warsaw Uprising, 20 pyres were lit to remove the evidence of the Wola massacres. Aktion 1005 did not only affect Jewish and Polish victims, however. In late 1943, a group of Jews from the Lipowa labour camp had been spared the Erntefest and instead sent to burn around 30,000 bodies in the Borek forest in Chełm. Most of the victims were Soviet POWs who had died in 1941 but the graves also contained thousands of Italian soldiers who had been shot after their country's abandonment of the Axis. Some members of the Chełm 1005 unit, like Weliczker's in Lwów, were able to escape, thereby providing the only evidence of crimes which would have otherwise remained unknown.[9]

Aktion 1005 had a macabre postscript as the Germans withdrew. Following the completion of the cremations in the extermination camps, the buildings were demolished, except for a handful in Sobibór, and trees planted. In Bełżec and Treblinka, Ukrainians were left behind as 'farmers' (in reality guards) whilst Sobibór remained a military camp.

However, once the Red Army occupied the east of the GG, all three sites saw a ‘gold rush’ as hundreds, perhaps thousands, of people – including Soviet soldiers – flocked to them to dig for Jewish valuables. Indeed, the Germans had first posted a guard at Bełżec because their original abandonment of the site in 1943 had prompted a similar reaction. The excavations continued after the war with numerous reports of fights between the gold-diggers, and even the use of torture to force rivals to admit where they had hidden their finds. In the autumn of 1945, Szmuel Pelc, a survivor from nearby Tomaszów Lubelski, was killed by the gleaners in Bełżec when he went to visit the site of his family’s murder.[10]

The horrific events at the sites of the former extermination camps were symptomatic of the chaos into which the east of the General Government descended after liberation. Looting was not restricted to scraps of gold amidst the ashes. There was, perhaps understandably, widespread plunder of former German properties but many Poles and Ukrainians were victims too with the readily thrown charge of collaboration providing an easy excuse. On 21 November 1944, Klukowski was assaulted in his living quarters in the hospital by two men who stole 45,000 złotych in cash and possessions worth half a million. He was told that this was retaliation for his supposed mistreatment of the underground since 1939. The pattern was repeated when the Red Army swept through the west of the General Government in January 1945. In Warsaw, for example, the looting of possessions abandoned in the rising began just a day after liberation, as citizens of Praga, peasants from the city’s hinterland and even the police sifted through the

rubble. In the countryside, encouraged by the rhetoric of the Communists, peasants seized property from landowners.[11]

Disorder was perhaps most acute in the Lublin region which had long since sunk into lawlessness, especially after the Zamość Aktion. The situation was aggravated by the fact that Lublin was the seat of the new pro-Moscow regime prior to Warsaw's liberation, making it a centre of both Communist repressions and underground resistance. The PKWN created a new Citizens' Militia to replace the hated blue police (although there was some continuity in personnel) alongside its own secret police force, the UB. However, these small, poorly equipped and ill-disciplined units proved incapable of maintaining order in the countryside, especially since the regime had other security priorities. For some members of the non-Communist underground, meanwhile, the distinction between the struggle against the new occupier and simple banditry became even more blurred than it had under the Germans. Klukowski discovered that his assailants were members of the Home Army who excused themselves by claiming that they had been misinformed. This offered scant consolation, as did the news that they had intended to kill him.[12]

Indeed, Klukowski's diary for late 1944 recorded frequent robberies by former partisans. He attributed this phenomenon to the demoralization, in both senses, of the underground. The end of the anti-German struggle (some 'cannot sit still without any action'), the collapse of military discipline and the need to survive had driven some to criminality: 'with very little moral preparation, no training for any type of job, and having no scruples, many become bandits'. He noted that most disguised their actions as patriotic reprisals, using charges of collaboration with the Soviets as 'a pretext for robbing people', much as had been

the case under the Germans. ‘Any criminal or alcoholic’, wrote Waldemar Lotnik, ‘could claim he was a Home Army soldier or a fighter for Free Poland, thereby providing the Soviet authority with a welcome propaganda gift.’[13] Not that the latter needed any excuse for repressions.

Following the German withdrawal, civilian leaders of the underground state had taken control of local administration but they were soon, typically within days, forced out and replaced by representatives of the PPR. Many, along with known or suspected AK activists, were then arrested – in the Lublin area the chief sites of incarceration were the city’s castle and Majdanek, an indication that not everything had changed. Some AK units took the fight to the Communists who responded with mass arrests in the villages; by the end of 1944 thousands languished in Globocnik’s former prisons or in the concentration camps of the Soviet interior. A cycle of violence, similar to that of the previous year, began to take hold. However, there was perhaps greater unease than before since, despite the activism of the NKVD, the chief police representatives of the state in the villages were Polish. Following the killing of 11 militia men by a mine in early December, Klukowski reflected, ‘I am against Poles killing Poles’. Combined with the banditry, which he felt the AK was not doing enough to restrain, he commented, ‘I feel my sympathy toward the Home Army diminishing’.[14]

For its part, the central leadership of the underground had limited ability to influence such events since it remained in the German-held areas of the GG. Leopold Okulicki, who Bór-Komorowski had nominated as his successor following Warsaw’s surrender, attempted to rally AK units in the Radom district and Burza operations indeed continued despite the Wehrmacht’s anti-partisan campaign. However, the Red Army’s second great offensive, bringing

the whole of Poland under its control within days in early 1945, prompted Okulicki to issue the order dissolving the AK on 19 January. Around 50,000 fighters laid down their arms and declared themselves to the Soviets, not always a wise move. The general himself, in line with a prepared plan, went underground with selected cadres in a new organization, NIE (from both the Polish word for ‘no’ and an abbreviation of the word for ‘independence’), which was intended to continue long-term conspiratorial work.[15]

This coincided with a crisis in the political leadership as a result of disarray within the government-in-exile, later exacerbated by the Yalta Conference which effectively sealed Poland’s fate. The Soviets and the PPR, whose position after Yalta was near impregnable, then used the offer of talks as a pretext for the arrest of 15 principal leaders of the underground, including Okulicki and the Government Delegate Jankowski, in March 1945. Their unfortunate interpreter was arrested with them. The men were flown to Moscow where they faced a show trial in June, which coincided with the negotiations for the Provisional Government of National Unity promised at Yalta. Although this was supposedly a coalition representing both the Lublin and London regimes (it included the former prime minister of the government-in-exile, Mikołajczyk), the new regime was dominated by Communists and their puppets. Nonetheless, it gained the recognition of the Allies. In this context, Korboński – the last Government Delegate following Jankowski’s arrest – and the other leaders still at liberty had little choice but to dissolve the secret state. On 1 July, by which time Korboński himself had been arrested, the Council of National Unity issued a manifesto calling for an end to underground resistance and urging opposition to the Communists by legal and democratic means. Although some

groups – notably the NSZ and the Freedom and Independence (WiN) movement created by Okulicki's successor Jan Rzepecki – continued the fight, the Soviets and their Polish allies ultimately achieved something the Germans had never been capable of: they destroyed the underground state.[16]

There were less lamented victims of the postwar order, not least Hans Frank. After two suicide bids and a conversion to Catholicism, the erstwhile Governor General took the witness stand at Nuremberg on 18 April 1946. Like Albert Speer, he appeared to admit culpability, telling the tribunal: 'I am possessed by a deep sense of guilt.' When asked if he had ever participated in the Holocaust, Frank answered in the affirmative. 'A thousand years will pass,' he added, 'and still this guilt of Germany will not have been erased.' However, as this statement suggests, Frank's apparent contrition did not necessarily indicate serious self-reflection. As he explained, 'I myself have never installed an extermination camp for Jews, or promoted the existence of such camps.' Rather, 'if Adolf Hitler has laid that dreadful responsibility on his people, then it is mine too'. His wider 'sense of guilt' had likewise arisen only 'now after I have gained a full insight into all the horrible atrocities'.[17]

Evasion consistently characterized Frank's testimony. The 2 October 1943 law on summary executions had actually been an attempt to restrain the police since it 'was the only way in which I could exert any influence on the sentences'. Without it, 'the Police would simply have acted at random', although that is of course precisely what they did with it, a point not missed by the prosecution. Frank's harsh words of 30 May 1940 regarding the Kraków professors and the AB-Aktion were part of a clever strategy: 'I did say all that

merely to hoodwink my enemies.' In reality, he was 'protesting against arbitrary actions' by establishing a right of reprieve, although he struggled to square this with the plain statements of his diary that this right did not apply during the AB-Aktion. Frank responded particularly indignantly to the charge that 'I am supposed to have enriched myself with the art treasures': they had merely been 'entrusted' to him. Regarding the paintings – including the Leonardo and the Rembrandt – still with him in Neuhaus, 'I was safeguarding them but not for myself.'[18] Such obfuscations were unsurprisingly not enough to save him from conviction on the charges of war crimes and crimes against humanity although he was acquitted of conspiring to commit crimes against peace. Hans Frank was executed on 16 October 1946.

During the ill-tempered government session of 25 January 1943 regarding the Zamość and 'asocial' Aktionen, Frank had sought to end the arguments between his subordinates and the police by urging them to remember that all of them 'figure in Herr Roosevelt's list of war criminals. I have the honour to be number 1. We have thus become, so to speak, accomplices in a world-historical sense.'[19] When it came to postwar justice, this proved to be far from the case. It is true that some of the most senior figures in the General Government's history – including Bühler and Fischer – were extradited to Poland and executed.[20] Globocnik, ever Himmler's faithful disciple, followed his master's example by taking his own life when captured by the British at the end of May 1945, one of a number of suicides. Others included Heinz Ehaus, the venal Kreishauptmann of Rzeszów,[21] and – probably – Friedrich Wilhelm Krüger, although uncertainty still surrounds the latter's precise fate.

However, such cases were the minority. Some hid successfully, such as Otto Wächter who followed the well-trodden path to Rome where he lived under an assumed name with the help of Bishop Hudal; Wächter died in the Eternal City in 1949. In other cases, hiding occurred in plain sight in the Federal Republic or Austria. Fritz Katzmann, the organizer of the murder of half a million Galician Jews, worked as a sales representative in Darmstadt under the alias of Bruno Albrecht. On his death in 1957 he was buried under his real name.[22] HSSPF Wilhelm Koppe, wanted by Poland for crimes in both the Warthegau and the GG, took his wife's maiden name and became the director of a Berlin chocolate factory. He was finally arrested in the 1960s but the prosecution was dropped in 1966 on grounds of ill health; Koppe lived for another ten years, a not uncommon characteristic of such cases. Hermann Höfle, Globocnik's chief of staff for Aktion Reinhard who personally oversaw the Aktionen in the Warsaw ghetto and the Lublin district, lived under his own name in West Germany and Austria after a few years of hiding, He even briefly worked in the 1950s for US military intelligence who, to be fair, were not aware of the magnitude of his crimes. Höfle was arrested only in 1961; he committed suicide in a Viennese prison cell the next year.[23]

Most did not need to worry. Whilst former GG officials frequently faced internment and subsequent denazification proceedings at the end of the war, most were rapidly able to resume normal lives. Walter Emmerich, the GG's economics chief, returned to his former career as a Hamburg merchant although he had never truly left it. Max Frauendorfer, Emmerich's peer at the labour department, became an executive of the Allianz insurance company and also pursued a political career in the CSU (the Bavarian sister

party of Adenauer's CDU). Indeed, several veterans of the GG remained in politics, such as Hans-Adolf Asbach, Kreishauptmann of Janów and Brzeżany, who held ministerial office in Schleswig-Holstein and became a leader of the BHE, a party whose concern for the rights of Germans forcibly displaced from the East attracted many Nazi veterans. However, not all remained on the conservative right. Lothar Weirauch – the former head of the population and welfare department whose incautiously expressed words on the fate of Poles had prompted Wilhelm Hagen's protest – rose to become a senior civil servant and then a prominent member of the FDP, Adenauer's liberal coalition partners. He was also secretly working for East German intelligence.[24]

Both Asbach and Weirauch faced investigations in the 1960s but nothing ever came of them since the dogged efforts of German activists and prosecutors were not matched with a commensurate response on the part of the judiciary. In fact, perhaps unsurprisingly given Frank's penchant for recruiting jurists, some of the former GG men became judges, such as Walter Zinser who, having been a Kreishauptmann in four locations and an official in the GG's central administration, was appointed a federal judge in 1953. Although a handful of Kreishauptleute had been extradited to Poland immediately after the war, not a single one was ever successfully prosecuted in West Germany although Walter Gentz and Otto Busse, the two who had most obviously personally participated in the Holocaust, both committed suicide after proceedings began in the late 1960s. With rather more success than Frank, most representatives of the civil administration were able to present themselves as 'good Germans', apolitical administrators untainted by the Holocaust and the mass

executions of Poles, which could be conveniently blamed on the police. Many remained in contact with each other, reminiscing in boardrooms and offices about more heroic times. Nor did all forget their old master. In his cell at Nuremberg, Frank had written a memoir entitled *In the Face of the Gallows*, which Brigitte later self-published. It became what Niklas termed 'a secret best seller', bringing the Frank family more than DM 200,000. Brigitte received letters from former officials and planners who wrote fondly of their 'professionally rewarding years' in their 'splendid and responsible' positions in the East.[25]

Greater effort was made to punish the professional killers, but even most of them escaped justice. Only 26 of the men who served in the Reinhard camps, amongst them Franz Stangl, who was extradited from Brazil in 1967, ever faced West German courts and seven of them were acquitted. Amongst the luckiest were Heinrich Unverhau and Ernst Zierke, who each three times evaded punishment: they were acquitted in separate trials relating to the T4 programme in the late 1940s and again in the Sobibór trial of 1965–6. In the case of their service in Bełżec, the charges against them, and five other men, were dropped in 1963. Part of the problem was that there was only one witness – Rudolf Reder – although some might have considered this in itself suggestive. Josef Oberhauser, who had overseen the creation of the camp and then commanded its guards, was left as the only person ever to be convicted for his role at arguably the most important killing centre of the Holocaust. Oberhauser, who had earlier served seven and a half years in East Germany for his role in T4, was sentenced in 1965 to four and a half years, or approximately one year for every 100,000 people murdered in the camp.[26]

It is hard not to contrast the postwar prosperity and freedom enjoyed by so many German veterans of the GG with the fate of their former subjects. Indeed, many of the witnesses encountered in this book – including Adam Czerniaków, Shimon Huberband, Chaim Kaplan, Ludwik Landau and Emanuel Ringelblum – did not make it that far. Others – such as Tadeusz Bór-Komorowski, Jan Karski, Karolina Lanckorońska and Miriam Wattenberg – found themselves in the West, either through wartime flight or liberation from German camps, and unable to return to their homeland. Others left Poland shortly after the war for varied reasons. Amongst them were Toivi Blatt, Stefan Korboński, Oscar Pinkus, Rudolf Reder, Bronisław Schatten, Leon Weliczker and Samuel Willenberg. In Korboński's case, flight – 'in somewhat dramatic circumstances' – came after having twice been imprisoned by the nascent Communist regime.[27] Though postwar court proceedings in Poland did address a minority of cases of collaboration or participation in crimes against Jews or the underground, for the most part the Communists targeted the leaders of civil society. Whilst 'the former GG boys', as Niklas Frank termed them,[28] largely enjoyed the fruits of the economic miracle, the people they had enslaved for five years endured the waking nightmare of Stalinism until partial liberalization from 1956. Amongst those who stayed and suffered was Zygmunt Klukowski who, despite testifying at Nuremberg in 1947 on the Zamość Aktion and publishing histories of the occupation, was arrested four times and served two prison spells between 1946 and 1954. Reflecting in May 1945 on the end of the war in Europe, the doctor wrote that 'people are free in many countries, but we still live in difficult conditions, exposed to violence, terror, and barbarian attacks from our so-called friends'.[29]

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Epilogue
‘A study of human madness’

In September 1946, shortly before his second arrest by the Communist police, Zygmunt Klukowski visited Warsaw for the first time since 1943. He had expected the city, now restored as Poland’s capital, to be in ruins and mostly was not surprised by what he saw. However, walking towards the castle and then through the Old Town, he was overcome:

> I wandered alone in these ruins and very seldom saw even the silhouette of another person. Terrifying dullness and deadness, overwhelming in its size and magnitude. I will never forget the sight of an annihilated Warsaw.[1]

Even before the war, Warsaw had never been considered one of the great beauties of central and eastern Europe. The Baedeker, whilst inevitably stressing the German roots of the city and its culture, noted that the cityscape ‘gives no uniform impression’; visits could be ‘limited essentially to the centre and the Old Town’.[2] In fact, these historic quarters were the only parts of Warsaw to be reconstructed in their original form after the war, a task that took many decades. The remainder of the vast areas destroyed in the aftermath of the two uprisings was repopulated with the wide avenues and functional apartment blocks so

characteristic of the Soviet bloc. Only Praga across the river preserved to any significant extent the redbrick tenements which had once been the heart of this dynamic, beguiling metropolis. As a result, even today it does not attract the cultural tourists who flock to Kraków, Prague or Budapest. This is a great shame since, although few would ever claim Warsaw as Europe's most aesthetically beautiful city, it is arguably the most emotionally powerful. Amidst the concrete and gleaming modern skyscrapers, one can find on almost every street evidence of the immense tragedies it suffered during the Second World War, whether in imposing statues, tiny plaques or the occasional ruins of a half-destroyed building. Goebbels's 1939 description of Warsaw as a 'memorial to suffering' still rings true today, or rather truer given the horrors that he and his associates inflicted.

Despite this, Warsaw never quite joined the likes of Hiroshima, Dresden or Coventry – all cities with fractions of its death toll – in the public consciousness as a symbol of the horrors of the war. Czesław Miłosz, who defected to the West in 1951 after an initial accommodation with Communism, noted that the destroyed villages of Lidice and Oradour were 'given more notice in the annals of Nazi-dominated Europe than the region where there were hundreds of Lidices and Oradours'. The poet, who devoted a chapter of his memoir *Native Realm* to the General Government, was not seeking to belittle these atrocities. Rather, he was suggesting that their scale made them easier to comprehend compared to the GG where 'the enormity of the crimes [...] paralyzes the imagination'. For Miłosz, the history of the General Government was 'a study of human madness' which defied rational explanation. Nazi policies 'had nothing to do with the necessities of war; in fact, and this was obvious to every spectator of the events,

it ran counter to the interests of the German Army'. That Frank and his regime wasted 'colossal energies' in pursuit of 'purely arbitrary goals' made the GG stand out even in 'a century in which ideology prevails over material advantage'.[3]

Of course, the Nazis did not see it in such terms. Perhaps the most troubling reflection prompted by the history of the Third Reich is that the Nazis believed that their aims and deeds were both rational and moral. This remained true even if some acknowledged the inherent inconsistencies of their goals in the GG, especially the tension between the quest for a racial utopia and the need for orderly colonial economic exploitation. Furthermore, it is important to understand that the Nazis did essentially achieve their most basic ambition, the one objective around which there was a clear consensus: the elimination of the Jews. At least 2 million Jews lost their lives in the General Government – in the gas chambers of the Reinhard camps, in the 'Holocaust by bullets' perpetrated in countless locations, and through starvation and disease in ghettos and labour camps. They included almost all of the Jews of the GG as well as more than 100,000 from other parts of Poland and around 150,000 from elsewhere in Europe.

The Nazi legacy was also significant in the waves of anti-Jewish violence which swept parts of Poland – especially the former Lublin and Radom districts – in 1945–6, killing more than 300 Jews and prompting many Holocaust survivors to leave their homeland for good. Nationalists attempted (and continue to attempt) to explain the pogroms in terms of the *Żydokommuna* stereotype, but whilst there were undoubtedly many people who associated Jews with Communism, there was only marginal temporal correlation between the peaks of anti-Jewish incidents and those of the

ongoing attacks on the regime. Rather, the violence more closely coincided with the return of survivors from hiding or camps, and later from exile in the Soviet interior. Though the issue remains contentious, it is undeniable that the effects of the occupation were important here, both generally – diminishing the perceived value of human life and releasing moral inhibitions – and specifically, not only in terms of anti-Semitism but, perhaps crucially, in bringing the mass transfer of Jewish property. To cite just one example, Fajga Himelblau, a camp survivor, was murdered in the village of Stoczek in the former Lublin district in June 1945 when she attempted to retrieve a sewing machine.[4]

The Nazi persecution and later murder of the Jews reflected wider plans for the ethnic reordering of eastern Europe in which the GG always featured prominently. Clearly, the German Heimat sought, in their different ways, by both Frank and Himmler from 1940–1 onwards was not achieved. Nonetheless, the Nazis did have a permanent demographic impact on the territory of the GG beyond the murder of the Jews. Most obviously, many hundreds of thousands of non-Jews – principally Poles and Soviet prisoners of war but also Ukrainians, Roma, Italian soldiers and others – lost their lives as a direct consequence of Nazi policy.[5] There were also profound indirect effects since the Nazi occupation was crucial in transforming the occasionally violent Polish-Ukrainian struggle of the 1930s into a bloodbath. The depressing message drawn by both Stalin and the Polish Communists from the violence in Wołyń and the GG was that the ethnic cleansing should be completed, whilst simultaneously repressing the ethnic cleansers of the UPA and Polish nationalist groups. As a result, between 1944 and 1946 more than 1 million people were mostly forcibly resettled within the former territory of the GG, now divided

by an international border after the emergent Polish Communist regime had predictably agreed to let Stalin keep almost all of the Kresy lands he had invaded in 1939. Poles were expelled westwards from Galicia whilst Ukrainians moved in the opposite direction, having been forced out of the former Lublin and Kraków districts. In 1947, the majority of the Ukrainians who had thus far been spared were deported not to the USSR but to Poland's euphemistically termed 'recovered territories' of the north-west which had been similarly 'abandoned' by their former German inhabitants. These Ukrainians, together with the small surviving Jewish communities, were subsumed within what was otherwise, for the first time in history, an ethnically homogenous Poland which existed alongside an almost equally monocultural Ukrainian Galicia within the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic.[6] The ethnic, religious and cultural diversity which had been one of Poland's greatest glories for the best part of a millennium had been permanently destroyed. Stalin and his lackeys accomplished this process, and it was hardly what Hitler, Himmler or Frank had intended. Nonetheless, it was in part a consequence of their actions.

The postwar violence suffered by Jews, Poles and Ukrainians contributed to memory wars regarding the history of the General Government. Members of each ethnic group could legitimately see themselves as victims, but this sometimes served to inhibit honest analysis of the more uncomfortable issues raised by the occupation, although there were always exceptions such as Miłosz. Communism – itself an unintentional consequence of Nazi rule – was an even greater constraint, marginalizing inconvenient issues such as the history of the AK or of Galicia. At the same time, the very illegitimacy of People's Poland led the Communists

to co-opt elements of the nationalist narrative giving rise to almost universally accepted myths which have proved remarkably durable on the political right. Even after 1989, often bitter arguments have arisen, especially regarding comparisons of victimhood and stereotypes of the behaviour of different ethnic groups.[7]

Nonetheless, considerable advances have been made in recent decades, primarily in Polish-Jewish understanding. The fall of Communism was followed by a renewal of interest in Poland's Jewish heritage, culminating in the opening of the Museum of the History of Polish Jews in Warsaw in 2013. Kazimierz in Kraków is no longer 'free of Jews' and celebrates an annual festival of Jewish culture. There has sometimes been criticism of such events for presenting a romanticized vision of the past which ignores or minimizes the more painful aspects of Polish-Jewish history. However, as the recent pioneering work of Polish historians has demonstrated, democratic Poland has led the way in Europe – west as well as east – in confronting the darkest corners of the darkest hours of its history, even if such explorations have continued to prove controversial.[8]

Such progress has proved more difficult in Galicia where the same nationalists who murdered Jews and Poles were also fighters for Ukrainian independence against the Soviets and, to a considerably lesser extent, the Nazis. An example can be seen in Drohobych (formerly Drohobycz), a small and somewhat down-at-heel city between L'viv and the Carpathians which was elevated to immortality by the short stories of the writer and artist Bruno Schulz, one of the last and greatest products of the Polish-Jewish symbiosis which so illuminated European culture. The site where Schulz was shot by the German police in November 1942 is now marked by a plaque on the pavement, largely unnoticed except by

Polish tour groups. By contrast, one cannot miss a large statue of Stepan Bandera – the leader and ideological mentor of the nationalist murderers of Poles and Jews – just yards away. The nearby central square, which figured prominently in Schulz's work, is similarly disfigured by a giant poster of Bandera. A few hundred metres away, the enormous main synagogue, once one of the greatest in Europe, slowly rots, a vivid symbol of a lost and forgotten world.[9]

Drohobych's synagogue is a silent, indeed unwanted, memorial. By contrast, many synagogues and Jewish cemeteries in Poland have been restored, sometimes by schoolchildren engaged in innovative educational projects, to join a plethora of consciously created memorial sites across the former territory of the General Government. Many monuments were erected under Communism which meant that they could usually only address the victims of Nazism in platitudes, referring to 'martyrs' and 'heroes'. Though many who died under the Nazis were indeed heroes, such terminology is problematic. It implies that a conscious choice was made to fight or die for a cause. Of course, some did make such a choice but their fate and that of others was determined primarily by the ethnic, social or political group to which they belonged. The language of martyrdom is also dangerous since it can, perhaps unwittingly, imply that these deaths were in some sense justified, that they served a higher cause. No cause could ever have justified this immense, unprecedented loss of life. The victims of the General Government should rather be honoured foremost as human beings. They were ordinary people – resistance fighters amongst them, yes, but also peasant girls, learned professors, Olympic athletes, gifted poets, starving soldiers, trusting grandmothers, cherished teachers, precious sons

and daughters – who had the misfortune to have been at the heart of the worst catastrophe mankind has ever seen.

On 18 September 1946, three months after Klukowski's visit to Warsaw and exactly four weeks before Hans Frank's execution, a dedicated team of Jewish and Polish activists probing the soil and rubble around what had been a Jewish elementary school in Warsaw found the treasure they were seeking. This took the form not of gold necklaces or Old Masters but of tin boxes containing the first cache of the *Oneg Shabbat* archive. As the Great Aktion had raged in August 1942, Emanuel Ringelblum had entrusted the materials to Israel Lichtenstein, a key *Oneg Shabbat* organizer and principal of the Yiddish school. Working with two teenage activists – Nahum Grzywacz and the already encountered David Graber – Lichtenstein buried the boxes in the school grounds. He survived the 1942 deportations, enabling him to bury another stash at the same location in February 1943, which was discovered by building workers in 1950. However, Lichtenstein and his family perished during or immediately after the ghetto uprising.[10]

Amongst the papers found in the first group of boxes were the last testaments written by the three men who buried them. Lichtenstein did 'not ask for any thanks, for any memorial, for any praise. Only to be remembered is what I wish.' He wanted the same for his wife, the artist and educator Gele Sekstein. Above all,

> I wish my little daughter to be remembered. Margalith is 20 months old today. She has fully mastered the Yiddish language, and speaks it perfectly. At nine months she began to speak Yiddish clearly. In intelligence she equals children of 3 or 4 years. […]

> I don’t lament my own life nor that of my wife. I pity only the so little, nice and talented girl. She too deserves to be remembered.[11]

They all do.

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Notes

Abbreviations

APH	*Acta Poloniae Historica*
DKHH	Peter Witte et al. (eds), *Der Dienstkalender Heinrich Himmlers 1941/42* (Hamburg, 1999)
DTB	Werner Präg and Wolfgang Jacobmeyer (eds), *Das Diensttagebuch des deutschen Generalgouverneurs in Polen 1939–1945* (Stuttgart, 1975)
EEPS	*East European Politics and Societies*
FGM	Tatiana Berenstein et al. (eds), *Faschismus – Getto – Massenmord: Dokumentation über Ausrottung und Widerstand der Juden in Polen während des zweiten Weltskrieges* (Berlin, 1960)
HGS	*Holocaust and Genocide Studies*
HSM	*Holocaust: Studies and Materials*
IMT	*Trials of the Major War Criminals before the International Military Tribunal,* 42 vols. (Nuremberg, 1947–9)
NCA	*Nazi Conspiracy and Aggression,* 8 vols. (Washington, 1946–58)
PWA	*Polish Western Affairs*
Reinhardt	Bogdan Musial (ed.), *'Aktion Reinhardt': Der Völkermord an der Juden im Generalgouvernement 1941–1944* (Osnabrück, 2004)
VOBlGG	*Verordnungsblatt für das Generalgouvernement* [until August 1940: *Verordnungsblatt des Generalgouverneurs für die besetzten polnischen Gebiete*] (Kraków, 1939–44)
YVS	*Yad Vashem Studies*

Introduction

1. Karl Baedeker, *Das Generalgouvernement* (Leipzig, 1943).
2. Ibid., 33–4.
3. Ibid., xx.
4. Ibid., 38–51, 112, v, xvii–xix, 244–5, 248, 250.

5. Ibid., v–vi, xxi–lxiii.
6. Ibid., v, 45–8.
7. Ibid., xvi, xiv, v, xxxv.
8. Ibid., 38–9, 139, 58, 219.
9. Ibid., xxvii.
10. Ibid., xi–xii.
11. Ibid., xxiii, xxix.
12. Ibid., xxix, xv–xvi, 223–4.
13. Ibid., xxvii, 50.
14. Ibid., xxix, 146–7, 129.
15. For the wider context: Nicholas Terry, 'Conflicting signals: British intelligence on the "Final Solution" through radio intercepts and other sources, 1941–42', *YVS*, 32 (2004), 352–96.
16. National Archives, Kew, HW 16/23, GPDD 355a, items 12 and 13/15. The message to Eichmann probably had the same contents. See Peter Witte and Stephen Tyas, 'A new document on the deportation and murder of Jews during "Einsatz Reinhardt" 1942', *HGS*, 15:3 (2001), 468–86.
17. National Archives, Kew, HW 16/65, ZIP/OS/6, 6.
18. The confusion regarding the operation's title was created by the Germans themselves who used varying combinations; 'Reinhart' was Höfle's own unique contribution (he was a notoriously poor speller). Historians generally prefer 'Aktion Reinhard'. For a dissenting opinion: Witte and Tyas, 'New document', 474–5.
19. The last transport of the year had probably reached Treblinka on 20 December: Witte and Tyas, 'New document', 473.
20. *Baedekers Generalgouvernement*, v.
21. Ibid., 137; Zygmunt Klukowski, *Red Shadow: A Physician's Memoir of the Soviet Occupation of Eastern Poland, 1944–1956*, ed. Andrew G. Klukowski (Jefferson, 1997), 104–5.
22. Zygmunt Klukowski, *Diary from the Years of Occupation 1939–1944*, ed. Andrew Klukowski and Helen Klukowski May (Urbana and Chicago, 1993), 195, 209–10.
23. Ibid., 219–21.
24. Richard J. Evans, *The Third Reich in Power* (London, 2008), 756.
25. Klukowski, *Diary*, 113.
26. *Baedekers Generalgouvernement*, 135–6.
27. For the best-known of these massacres, outside Józefów, see Christopher R. Browning, *Ordinary Men: Reserve Police Battalion 101 and the Final Solution in Poland*, (London, 2001), 55–70. Klukowski noted the massacre on 17 July 1942: *Diary*, 207.
28. *Baedekers Generalgouvernement*, 136.
29. Klukowski, *Diary*, 227–31; Czesław Madajczyk (ed.), *Zamojszczyzna – Sonderlaboratorium SS* (Warsaw, 1979), I, 220–2; *Baedekers Generalgouvernement*, 10.
30. *Baedekers Generalgouvernement*, xxxiv.
31. For the wider context: Nicholas Lane, 'Tourism in Nazi-occupied Poland: Baedeker's *Generalgouvernement*', *East European Jewish Affairs*, 27:1

(1997), 45–56. Jane Caplan's forthcoming paper will offer the fullest analysis of the book's history.

32. Michał Zylberberg, *A Warsaw Diary 1939–1945* (London, 1969), 31; Emanuel Ringelblum, *Notes from the Warsaw Ghetto: The Journal of Emmanuel Ringelblum*, ed. Jacob Sloan (New York, 1974), 181, 266; *Baedekers Generalgouvernement*, between 88 and 89.
33. Ringelblum, *Notes*, 181; *Baedekers Generalgouvernement*, v, 34, 85, 127, 157–8.
34. Elizabeth Harvey, *Women and the Nazi East: Agents and Witnesses of Germanisation* (New Haven, 2003), 241.
35. E.g. Peter Black, 'Askaris in the "Wild East": the deployment of auxiliaries and the implementation of Nazi racial policy in Lublin district', in Charles W. Ingrao and Franz A. J. Szabo (eds), *The Germans and the East* (West Lafayette, 2008), 277–309.
36. David Furber and Wendy Lower, 'Colonialism and genocide in Nazi-occupied Poland and Ukraine', in A. Dirk Moses (ed.), *Empire, Colony, Genocide: Conquest, Occupation, and Subaltern Resistance in World History* (New York, 2008), 381.
37. Czesław Miłosz, *Native Realm: A Search for Self-Definition* (New York, 2002), 244.
38. For rare earlier uses of the guide: Götz Aly and Suzanne Heim, *Architects of Annihilation: Auschwitz and the Logic of Destruction* (London, 2003), 115–17; David Crowe, *Oskar Schindler: The Untold Account of His Life, Wartime Activities and the True Story Behind The List* (Cambridge, MA, 2007), 133–4; Rudy Koshar, *German Travel Cultures* (Oxford, 2000), 153–6.
39. See Omer Bartov's important essay, 'Eastern Europe as the site of genocide', *The Journal of Modern History*, 80:3 (2008), 557–93.

1 'The Devil's work'

1. Joseph Goebbels, *The Goebbels Diaries 1939–1941*, ed. Fred Taylor (London, 1982), 36–7. He had expressed similar thoughts on 17 October after viewing film footage of Warsaw's Jewish district: ibid., 23. Goebbels dated the visit to Łódź to 2 November. However, in Frank's official diary it is given as 31 October: *DTB*, 53–5. It is also clear from Goebbels's account that he was describing a visit of at least two days.
2. Goebbels, *Diaries 1939–1941*, 16–20; Alfred Rosenberg, *Das Politische Tagebuch Alfred Rosenbergs aus den Jahren 1933/35 und 1939/40*, ed. Hans-Günther Seraphim (Göttingen, 1956), 81.
3. E.g. Czesław Pilichowski, *No Time-Limit for These Crimes!* (Warsaw, 1980), 7–13; Richard C. Lukas, *The Forgotten Holocaust: The Poles under German Occupation 1939–1944* (Lexington, 1986), 1–5.
4. Vejas Gabriel Liulevicius, *The German Myth of the East: 1800 to the Present* (Oxford, 2009), passim; *Baedekers Generalgouvernement*, xlvi; Antony Polonsky, 'The German occupation of Poland during the First and Second World Wars: a comparison', in Roy A. Prete and A. Hamish Ion (eds), *Armies of Occupation* (Waterloo, ON, 1984), 97–142; Michael Burleigh, *Germany*

Turns Eastwards: A Study of Ostforschung in the Third Reich (Cambridge, 1988), 5–7; Karol Fiedor et al., 'The image of the Poles in Germany and of the German in Poland in inter-war years and its role in shaping the relations between the two states', *PWA*, 19:2 (1978), 205. Poland had its own colonial 'myth of the East' regarding the Kresy, the borderland regions primarily inhabited by Ukrainians and Belarusians.

5. Fiedor et al., 'Image', 206–10; Burleigh, *Germany*, 25–32.
6. John Connelly, 'Nazis and Slavs. From Racial Theory to Racist Practice', *Central European History*, 32:1 (1999), 1–33, especially 3, 10–12; Ian Kershaw, *Hitler 1936–1945: Nemesis* (London, 2000), 237; Adolf Hitler, *Mein Kampf* (London, 1992), 246–7, 354–5, 580, 602.
7. Adolf Hitler, *Hitler's Second Book: The Unpublished Sequel to* Mein Kampf, ed. Gerhard L. Weinberg (New York, 2003), 53.
8. Ibid., 148–52. See also *Mein Kampf*, 598.
9. Hitler, *Second Book*, 148; Connelly, 'Nazis', 3–6.
10. Gerhard L. Weinberg, *The Foreign Policy of Hitler's Germany: Diplomatic Revolution in Europe 1933–1936* (Chicago, 1970), 12–14, 57–74, 188–92, 303–10.
11. Gerhard L. Weinberg, *The Foreign Policy of Hitler's Germany: Starting World War II 1937–1939* (Chicago, 1980), 209.
12. Ibid., 481–90, 497–504, 535–79; Kershaw, *Hitler*, 158–9, 177–9, 189.
13. *IMT*, XXVI, 341, 523; Connelly, 'Nazis', 21–2.
14. Quotations from Alexander B. Rossino, 'Destructive impulses: German soldiers and the conquest of Poland', *HGS*, 11:3 (1997), 354–6.
15. Tomasz Szarota, 'Poland and Poles in German eyes during World War II', *PWA*, 19:2 (1978), 229–33; Harry Kenneth Rosenthal, *German and Pole: National Conflict and Modern Myth* (Gainesville, 1976), 118–19.
16. Szarota, 'Poland', 233–6; Czesław Madajczyk, *Die Okkupationspolitik Nazideutschlands in Polen 1939–1945* (East Berlin, 1987), 10–14; Kershaw, *Hitler*, 241–2.
17. Robert Seidel, *Deutsche Besatzungspolitik in Polen: Der Distrikt Radom 1939–1945* (Paderborn, 2006), 177–8; Janusz Gumkowski and Kazimierz Leszczyński, *Poland under Nazi Occupation* (Warsaw, 1961), 53–6; Christopher R. Browning (with Jürgen Matthäus), *The Origins of the Final Solution: The Evolution of Nazi Jewish Policy, September 1939–March 1942* (London, 2005), 16–17; Helmuth Groscurth, *Tagebücher eines Abwehroffiziers 1938–1940*, ed. Helmut Krausnick and Harold C. Deutsch (Stuttgart, 1970), 201.
18. Jeremy Noakes and Geoffrey Pridham (eds), *Nazism 1919–1945: Volume 3: Foreign Policy, War and Racial Extermination: A Documentary Reader* (Exeter, 2001), 136.
19. Hans Umbreit, 'Towards continental dominion', in Bernhard R. Kroener et al., *Germany and the Second World War: Volume 5: Organisation and Mobilisation of the German Sphere of Power: Part I: Wartime Administration, Economy and Manpower Resources, 1939–1941* (Oxford, 2000), 49–50.
20. Mikołaj Kunicki, 'Unwanted collaborators: Leon Kozłowski, Władysław Studnicki and the problem of collaboration among Polish conservative

politicians in World War II', *European Review of History*, 8:2 (2001), 206, 209–14.

21. Kershaw, *Hitler*, 238–9; Goebbels, *Diaries 1939–1941*, 15; Gerhard Eisenblätter, 'Grundlinien der Politik des Reiches gegenüber dem Generalgouvernement, 1939–1945' (Ph.D. thesis, Frankfurt, 1969), 14–27; Czesław Madajczyk, *Generalna Gubernia w planach hitlerowskich: Studia* (Warsaw, 1961), 7–62.
22. Umbreit, 'Towards', 50–4; Noakes and Pridham, *Nazism: Volume 3*, 317–19.
23. Goebbels, *Diaries 1939–1941*, 20, 36; Browning, *Origins*, 15–24, 74–81.
24. *Baedekers Generalgouvernement*, li–lii. For the rather forbidding cross-border regulations: ibid., ix–x. For the legal relationship to the Reich: Diemut Majer, *'Non-Germans' under the Third Reich: The Nazi Judicial and Administrative System in Germany and Occupied Eastern Europe with Special Regard to Occupied Poland, 1939–1945* (Baltimore, 2003), 761 n. 22.
25. *Baedekers Generalgouvernement*, lii; *DTB*, 117–18, 251. For the status of the GG in international law: Majer, *'Non-Germans'*, 264–70.
26. *Baedekers Generalgouvernement*, lii, iv; *DTB*, 209, 73; Simon Segal, *Nazi Rule in Poland* (London, 1943), 11.
27. *DTB*, 60; Madajczyk, *Okkupationspolitik*, 31–4; Eisenblätter, 'Grundlinien', 25.
28. *DTB*, 209, 129, 251.
29. *IMT*, XXVI, 378–9. Keitel's notes are the main source for what follows unless otherwise indicated. The speech – typically – lacked coherent organization so the summary presented here groups points thematically.
30. *IMT*, XXVI, 381, and Franz Halder, *Kriegstagebuch*, ed. Hans-Adolf Jacobsen, I (Stuttgart, 1962), 107, for Frank as the 'only authority'.
31. Groscurth, *Tagebücher*, 381.
32. *IMT*, XXVI, 381; Halder, *Kriegstagebuch*, I, 107.
33. Ibid., 107. The phrase ('*Teufelswerk*') was not used in Keitel's notes but did appear in his summary for Quartermaster General Eduard Wagner: *IMT*, XXVI, 381. See also Groscurth, *Tagebücher*, 381.
34. Madajczyk, *Okkupationspolitik*, 234, 238–9; Frank Golczewski, 'Polen', in Wolfgang Benz (ed.), *Dimension des Völkermord: Die Zahl der jüdischen Opfer des Nationalsozialismus* (Munich, 1991), 415–26; Bogdan Musial, *Deutsche Zivilverwaltung und Judenverfolgung im Generalgouvernement: Eine Fallstudie zum Distrikt Lublin 1939–1944* (Wiesbaden, 1999), 21–2.
35. Based on Główny Urząd Statystyczny Rezeczpospolitej Polskiej, *Drugi powszechny spis ludności z dnia 9 grudnia 1931 r.* (Warsaw, 1932). The others were Częstochowa, Lublin, Radom, Kielce and Piotrków. Lwów, Stanisławów and Przemyśl (which was split between the Germans and Soviets in 1939) would be added in 1941 when Galicia joined the GG.
36. Sonja Schwaneberg, 'The Economic Exploitation of the Generalgouvernement in Poland by the Third Reich 1939 to 1945' (D.Phil. thesis, Oxford, 2006), 11–28, 87–9, 167.
37. Antony Polonsky, *Politics in Independent Poland: The Crisis of Constitutional Government 1921–1939* (Oxford, 1972).

38. Madajczyk, *Okkupationspolitik*, 4–5; Schwaneberg, 'Exploitation', 53; Joanna K. M. Hanson, *The Civilian Population and the Warsaw Uprising of 1944* (Cambridge, 1982), 5–6; Goebbels, *Diaries 1939–1941*, 37.

2 'Gangster Gau'

1. *DTB*, 59; Polish Ministry of Information, *The Nazi Kultur in Poland* (London, 1945), 124–8; Lynn H. Nicholas, *The Rape of Europa: The Fate of Europe's Cultural Treasures in the Third Reich and the Second World War* (London, 1994), 66–7.
2. *DTB*, 59; Polish Ministry, *Kultur*, 127; Jonathan Petropoulos, *Art as Politics in the Third Reich* (Chapel Hill, 1996), 101–3, 108–9; Heather Pringle, *The Master Plan: Himmler's Scholars and the Holocaust* (London, 2006), 197–207; Nicholas, *Rape*, 59, 62, 70.
3. Petropoulos, *Art*, 103–7; Pringle, *Master Plan*, 201–6.
4. Nicholas, *Rape*, 68–9; Petropoulos, *Art*, 227, 284.
5. Niklas Frank, *In the Shadow of the Reich* (New York, 1991), 138; Nicholas, *Rape*, 69, 76; Petropoulos, *Art*, 105–7, 226–9; Polish Ministry, *Kultur*, 101, 127; *DTB*, 147.
6. The fullest biographies are Dieter Schenk, *Hans Frank: Hitlers Kronjurist und Generalgouverneur* (Frankfurt, 2006), and Martyn Housden, *Hans Frank, Lebensraum and the Holocaust* (Basingstoke, 2003). A brief but insightful study is Christoph Klessmann, 'Hans Frank: Party jurist and Governor-General in Poland', in Ronald Smelser and Rainer Zitelmann (eds), *The Nazi Elite* (Basingstoke, 1993), 39–47.
7. Ibid., 41. Rosenberg's appointment to Ostland in 1941 can be seen in a similar light.
8. N. Frank, *Shadow*, 112; *VOBlGG* (1939), 1–2; *DTB*, 128, 151, 705.
9. G. M. Gilbert, *The Psychology of Dictatorship: Based on an Examination of the Leaders of Nazi Germany* (New York, 1950), 143; Curzio Malaparte, *Kaputt* (New York, 1991), 67.
10. *VOBlGG* (1939), 2; *DTB*, 104.
11. Gilbert, *Psychology*, 146–9; NCA, VI, 750.
12. Ibid., 749; *DTB*, 209.
13. NCA, VI, 748–9; Malaparte, *Kaputt*, 77; N. Frank, *Shadow*, 103, 212; Nicholas, *Rape*, 76; Dieter Schenk, *Krakauer Burg: Die Machtzentrale des Generalgouverneurs Hans Frank 1939–1945* (Berlin, 2010), 108–9.
14. For a clear overview of the structure of the civil administration: Musial, *Zivilverwaltung*, 23–66.
15. Nicholas, *Rape*, 76; Petropoulos, *Art*, 227
16. *IMT*, XII, 64; Majer, '*Non-Germans*', 767 n. 19; *NCA*, VI, 746.
17. For this and the following career outlines: *DTB*, 945–56.
18. N. Frank, *Shadow*, 11
19. Majer, '*Non-Germans*', 769 n. 35.
20. See Markus Roth, *Herrenmenschen: Die deutsche Kreishauptleute im besetzten Polen – Karrierewege, Herrschaftpraxis und Nachgeschichte* (Göttingen, 2009), 442–51, for details of each Kreis.

21. Marek Jan Chodakiewicz, *Between Nazis and Soviets: A Case Study of Occupation Politics in Poland, 1939–1947* (Lanham, MD, 2004), 69–70; Umbreit, 'Towards', 60; Schwaneberg, 'Exploitation', 40–7.
22. Umbreit, 'Towards', 58–60; Musial, *Zivilverwaltung*, 25–6, 30; Schwaneberg, 'Exploitation', 38–48.
23. Peter Longerich, *Heinrich Himmler* (Oxford, 2011), 425–35; Robert L. Koehl, *RKFVD: German Resettlement and Population Policy 1939–1945: A History of the Reich Commission for the Strengthening of Germandom* (Cambridge, MA, 1957), especially 50–4; IMT, XXVI, 255–7.
24. Longerich, *Himmler*, 131.
25. Ibid., 351.
26. Biographies include: Joseph Poprzeczny, *Odilo Globocnik: Hitler's Man in the East* (Jefferson, 2004); Siegfried J. Pucher, *'... in der Bewegung führend tätig': Odilo Globocnik – Kämpfer für den Anschluss, Vollstrecker des Holocaust* (Klagenfurt, 1997); Berndt Rieger, *Creator of the Nazi Death Camps: The Life of Odilo Globocnik* (London, 2007).
27. See the helpful diagram in Majer, '*Non-Germans*', 578.
28. Lucjan Dobroszycki and Marek Getter, 'The Gestapo and the Polish Resistance Movement (on the example of the Radom *Distrikt*)', *APH*, 4 (1961), 85–118, gives a broader overview than its title suggests.
29. *DTB*, 574; Edward B. Westermann, ' "Friend and Helper": German uniformed police operations in Poland and the General Government, 1939–1941', *Journal of Military History*, 58:4 (1994), 643–62; Edward B. Westermann, *Hitler's Police Battalions: Enforcing Racial War in the East* (Lawrence, 2005); Browning, *Ordinary Men*.
30. *VOBlGG* (1939), 5, 10; *IMT*, XII, 10.
31. Peter Black, 'Rehearsal for "Reinhard"? Odilo Globocnik and the Lublin Selbstschutz', *Central European History Review*, 25:2 (1992), 204–26; Peter Black, 'Indigenous collaboration in the Government General: the case of the Sonderdienst', in Pieter M. Judson and Marsha L. Rozenblit (eds), *Constructing Nationalities in East Central Europe* (New York, 2005), 243–66; *DTB*, 574.
32. Dobroszycki and Getter, 'Gestapo', 94–7 (for police rivalries in Radom); Schwaneberg, 'Exploitation', 99–103 (for interdepartmental disputes over economic policy); Majer, '*Non-Germans*', 279–81.
33. Roth, *Herrenmenschen*; Musial, *Zivilverwaltung*, 47–62, 69–73.
34. Chodakiewicz, *Between*, 71, 75; Westermann, *Police Battalions*, 142; Roth, *Herrenmenschen*, 34, 54–6; Klukowski, *Diary*, 106.
35. Roth, *Herrenmenschen*, 37–8.
36. Quoted in Thomas Kühne, *Belonging and Genocide: Hitler's Community, 1918–1945* (New Haven, 2010), 93.
37. Quoted in Roth, *Herrenmenschen*, 46.
38. Ibid., 452–3; *DTB*, 48.
39. For what follows: Musial, *Zivilverwaltung*, 80–6; Roth, *Herrenmenschen*, 87–110.
40. Quoted in Aly and Heim, *Architects*, 118.
41. Longerich, *Himmler*, 345–6; Roth, *Herrenmenschen*, 37, 458–9.
42. Musial, *Zivilverwaltung*, 84–5; Roth, *Herrenmenschen*, 458–9.

43. See Frank Bajohr, *Parvenus und Profiteure: Korruption in der NS-Zeit* (Frankfurt, 2004).
44. Ludwik Landau, *Kronika lat wojny i okupacji*, I (Warsaw, 1962), 270; Karolina Lanckorońska, *Those Who Trespass against Us: One Woman's War against the Nazis* (London, 2005), 64–5; Klukowski, *Diary*, 276.
45. Lanckorońska, *Those*, 64; A Polish Doctor, *I Saw Poland Suffer* (London, 1941), 54; Malaparte, *Kaputt*, 81; Bajohr, *Parvenus*, 78; N. Frank, *Shadow*, 118, 141–57; Housden, *Frank*, 162–4.
46. Housden, *Frank*, 164–5; Frank Bajohr, 'The Holocaust and corruption', in Gerald D. Feldman and Wolfgang Seibel (eds), *Networks of Nazi Persecution: Bureaucracy, Business and the Organisation of the Holocaust* (New York, 2005), 118–38.
47. See Crowe, *Schindler*; Bruno Shatyn, *A Private War: Surviving in Poland on False Papers, 1941–1945* (Detroit, 1985), 220–1.
48. Felicja Karay, *Death Comes in Yellow: Skarżysko-Kamienna Slave Labor Camp* (Amsterdam, 1996), 1–16, 23–4.
49. Aly and Heim, *Architects*, 63–4, 149, 156–7; Burleigh, *Germany*, 283.
50. Harvey, *Women*, especially 240–60 (255 for the pram).
51. Christopher R. Browning, 'Genocide and public health: German doctors and Polish Jews, 1939–1941', in Christopher R. Browning, *The Path to Genocide: Essays on the Launching of the Final Solution* (Cambridge, 1992), 145–68; Ringelblum, *Notes*, 149; Helge Grabitz and Wolfgang Scheffler, *Letzte Spuren: Ghetto Warschau, SS-Arbeitslager Trawniki, Aktion Erntefest: Fotos und Dokumente über Opfer des Endlösungswahns im Spiegel der historischen Ereignisse* (Berlin, 1988), 177.

3 'Gentlemen, we are not murderers'

1. Schenk, *Frank*, 153–4.
2. Henryk Batowski, 'Nazi Germany and Jagiellonian University (Sonderaktion Krakau, 1939)', *PWA*, 19:1 (1978), 113–14. A full account of the affair can be found in Jochen August (ed.), *'Sonderaktion Krakau': Die Verhaftung der Krakauer Wissenschaftler am 6. November 1939* (Hamburg, 1997), 7–65.
3. Batowski, 'Nazi Germany', 116, 116–17; August, *'Sonderaktion Krakau'*, 7–8, 280.
4. *DTB*, 212.
5. Musial, *Zivilverwaltung*, 106; Musial, 'Das Schlachtfeld zweier totalitärer Systeme. Polen unter deutscher und sowjetischer Herrschaft 1939–1941', in Klaus-Michael Mallmann and Bogdan Musial (eds), *Genesis des Genozids: Polen 1939–1941* (Darmstadt, 2004), 15–16; Browning, *Origins*, 28–35.
6. Władysław Bartoszewski, *Warsaw Death Ring 1939–1944* (Warsaw, 1968), 20–1; Alexander B. Rossino, 'Nazi anti-Jewish Policy during the Polish campaign: the case of Einsatzgruppe von Woyrsch', *German Studies Review*, 24 (2001), 35–54; Shatyn, *Private War*, 121–2.
7. Madajczyk, *Okkupationspolitik*, 57–8; Kunicki, 'Collaborators', 206–7.
8. Madajczyk, *Okkupationspolitik*, 59; Bartoszewski, *Death Ring*, 21; Szarota, 'Poland', 234, 242.

9. *IMT*, XII, 23. Frank's account was supported by Bühler: ibid., 74.
10. *DTB*, 64; Christoph Klessmann, *Der Selbstbehauptung einer Nation: Nationalsozialistische Kulturpolitik und polnische Widerstandbewegung im Generalgouvernement 1939–1945* (Düsseldorf, 1971), 56–7; Eisenblätter, 'Grundlinien', 159–60; Klukowski, *Diary*, 49; Wacław Długoborski, 'Die deutsche Besatzungspolitik und die Veränderung der sozialen Struktur Polens 1939–1945', in Wacław Długoborski (ed.), *Zweiter Weltkrieg und sozialer Wandel: Achsenmächte und besetzten Länder* (Göttingen, 1981), 311; Bartoszewski, *Death Ring*, 27, 40–4.
11. *DTB*, 210, 127–31.
12. Ibid., 209–12, 219.
13. Ibid., 202–3, 214–15.
14. Klukowski, *Diary*, 91–100, 355–7; Bartoszewski, *Death Ring*, 55–67.
15. Ibid., 67–77, 355; Danuta Czech, *Auschwitz Chronicle 1939–1945* (London, 1990), 13.
16. Landau, *Kronika*, I, 635–6; Bartoszewski, *Death Ring*, 88–91.
17. *DTB*, 220; Landau, *Kronika*, I, 635.
18. Westermann, *Police Battalions*, 143–4; Bartoszewski, *Death Ring*, 24–5; Adam Czerniaków, *The Warsaw Diary of Adam Czerniakow: Prelude to Doom*, ed. Raul Hilberg et al. (New York, 1979), 90–1, 93.
19. Bartoszewski, *Death Ring*, 29–33; Gumkowski and Leszczyński, *Poland*, 118–19; Władysław Szpilman, *The Pianist: The Extraordinary Story of One Man's Survival in Warsaw, 1939–1945* (London, 2002), 44.
20. Black, 'Rehearsal', 219–21; Gumkowski and Leszczyński, *Poland*, 119–23. This was a different Józefów to the town whose Jews were massacred by Reserve Police Battalion 101 in July 1942.
21. Seidel, *Besatzungspolitik*, 185, 190–1.
22. *DTB*, 214–215; Black, 'Rehearsal', 220–1; Musial, *Zivilverwaltung*, 29–30.
23. *The Persecution of the Catholic Church in German-Occupied Poland: Reports Presented by H.E. Cardinal Hlond, Primate of Poland, to Pope Pius XII, Vatican Broadcasts and Other Reliable Evidence* (London, 1941), 108; Götz Aly, *Final Solution: Nazi Population Policy and the Murder of the European Jews*, (London, 1999), 71, 84 n. 49.
24. *DTB*, 130; Polish Ministry, *Kultur*, 19–22; *Persecution of the Catholic Church*, 93.
25. Polish Ministry, *Kultur*, 22–3; *Persecution of the Catholic Church*, 92.
26. Polish Ministry, *Kultur*, 123; Andrzej Chwalba, 'The ethnic panorama of Nazi-occupied Kraków', in Michał Galas and Antony Polonsky (eds), *Polin: Studies in Polish Jewry, Volume 23: Jews in Kraków* (Oxford, 2011), 351–2; Lanckorońska, *Those*, 52–3.
27. *DTB*, 53; *VOBlGG* (1939), 18–19; Polish Ministry, *Kultur*, 40–2; Klessmann, *Selbstbehauptung*, 56–7, 78–9.
28. Ibid., 61–70; Burleigh, *Germany*, 253–90; *DTB*, 173–5, 372–3.
29. Burleigh, *Germany*, 268–72; Aly and Heim, *Architects*, 122–5.
30. Klessmann, *Selbstbehauptung*, 58; Burleigh, *Germany*, 254; Martin Dean, *Robbing the Jews: The Confiscation of Jewish Property in the Holocaust, 1939–1945* (Cambridge, 2008), 186; Polish Ministry, *Kultur*, 75–93, 99–110.
31. *IMT*, XXXVI, 482–3.

32. Ibid., 328–331; *DTB*, 91.
33. Schwaneberg, 'Exploitation', 40–1; *DTB*, 129.
34. Schwaneberg, 'Exploitation', 41–4, 52–6; *DTB*, 74–7, 91; *IMT*, XXVII, 200–6.
35. *DTB*, 129; *VOBlGG* (1939), 37.
36. *VOBlGG* (1940), I, 23–35; *DTB*, 223 (see also 185–6).
37. *FGM*, 165–6; Majer, *'Non-Germans'*, 794 n. 27; Schwaneberg, 'Exploitation', 239–50; Dieter Pohl, 'The robbery of Jewish property in Eastern Europe under German occupation, 1939–1942', in Martin Dean et al. (eds), *Robbery and Restitution: The Conflict over Jewish Property in Europe* (New York, 2007), 70–6; Klukowski, *Diary*, 113; *FGM*, 186–7.
38. Aly and Heim, *Architects*, 115–59; Schwaneberg, 'Exploitation', 87–100, 240–1, 244–5; Pohl, 'Robbery', 74–5.
39. *VOBlGG* (1939), 5–6.
40. For Polish forced labour: Ulrich Herbert, *Hitler's Foreign Workers: Enforced Foreign Labour in Germany under the Third Reich* (Cambridge, 1997), especially 61–4, 79–85; Schwaneberg, 'Exploitation', 112–29.
41. *DTB*, 116; Klukowski, *Diary*, 76, 78, 81–2.
42. *DTB*, 149, 176–7.
43. Klukowski, *Diary*, 89.
44. Herbert, *Foreign Workers*, 85.
45. For Jewish labour: Browning, *Origins*, 141–9; Schwaneberg, 'Exploitation', 147–51.
46. *FGM*, 200. See also Musial, *Zivilverwaltung*, 116.
47. *DTB*, 77; *FGM*, 205–8; Ringelblum, *Notes*, 17.
48. *DTB*, 215–217, 220–2.
49. Quoted in Browning, *Origins*, 145.
50. For Jewish forced labour in the Lublin district: Musial, *Zivilverwaltung*, 111–12, 115–18, 164–70.
51. For the Bełżec labour camps: David Silberklang, 'Willful murder in the Lublin District of Poland', in Michael L. Morgan and Benjamin Pollock (eds), *The Philosopher as Witness: Fackenheim and Responses to the Holocaust* (Albany, 2008), 186–90; Black, 'Rehearsal', 215–18.
52. Musial, *Zivilverwaltung*, 164, 167–8; Janina Kiełboń, 'Juden Deportationen in den Distrikt Lublin (1939–1943)', *Reinhardt*, 121–2; Jacek Andrzej Młynarczyk, *Judenmord in Zentralpolen: Der Distrikt Radom im Generalgouvernement 1939–1945* (Darmstadt, 2007), 145.
53. Silberklang, 'Willful murder', 186; Black, 'Rehearsal', 212; Samuel Gruber, *I Chose Life* (New York, 1978), 25.
54. *FGM*, 221; Silberklang, 'Willful murder', 189–90.
55. *FGM*, 218–21.
56. Shimon Huberband, *Kiddush Hashem: Jewish Religious and Cultural Life in Poland during the Holocaust*, ed. Jeffrey S. Gurock and Robert S. Hirt (Hoboken and New York, 1987), 50–1; Philip Friedman, *Roads to Extinction: Essays on the Holocaust* (New York and Philadelphia, 1980), 219–20.
57. Marcel Reich-Ranicki, *The Author of Himself: The Life of Marcel Reich-Ranicki* (London, 2001), 123, 129.
58. *VOBlGG* (1939), 6–7.

59. Ibid., 72–3; *FGM*, 38–9. For the wider context: Dan Michman, 'Why did Heydrich write the *Schnellbrief*? A remark on the reason and on its significance', *YVS*, 32 (2004), 433–47; Dan Michman, 'Reevaluating the emergence, function, and form of the Jewish Councils phenomenon', in Center for Advanced Holocaust Studies, *Ghettos 1939–1945: New Research and Perspectives on Definition, Daily Life and Survival: Symposium Presentations* (Washington, 2005), 67–84.
60. Aharon Weiss, 'Jewish leadership in occupied Poland – positions and attitudes', *YVS*, 12 (1977), 336–42; Czerniaków, *Diary*, 111–12.
61. *VOBlGG* (1939), 61–2; Friedman, *Roads*, 12; Halina Nelken, *And Yet, I Am Here!* (Amherst, 1999), 59; Ringelblum, *Notes*, 22.
62. *FGM*, 46.
63. Dieter Pohl, *Von der 'Judenpolitik' zum Judenmord: Der Distrikt Lublin des Generalgouvernements 1939–1944* (Frankfurt, 1993), 56; Musial, *Zivilverwaltung*, 127.
64. *FGM*, 38; Rosenberg, *Tagebuch*, 81.
65. Jonny Moser, 'Nisko: the first experiment in deportation', *Simon Wiesenthal Center Annual*, 2 (1985), 1–30; Browning, *Origins*, 36–43; *IMT*, XXX, 95.
66. Kiełboń, 'Deportationen', 114–19, 124.
67. For resettlement policy: Phillip T. Rutherford, *Prelude to the Final Solution: The Nazi Program for Deporting Ethnic Poles, 1939–1941* (Lawrence, 2007); Browning, *Origins*, 43–110; Aly, *Final Solution*, 33–184.
68. *FGM*, 42–3; *DTB*, 60–1.
69. All deportation figures from Browning, *Origins*, 109.
70. *Persecution of the Catholic Church*, 66.
71. Rutherford, *Prelude*, 90–1; Polish Ministry of Information, *The German New Order in Poland* (London, 1942), 189.
72. Klukowski, *Diary*, 59–60; Polish Ministry, *New Order*, 195–6.
73. Heinrich Himmler, *Geheimreden 1933 bis 1945 und andere Ansprachen*, ed. Bradley F. Smith and Agnes F. Peterson (Frankfurt, 1974), 137; *DTB*, 95; *IMT*, XXXVI, 299–307; Browning, *Origins*, 65.
74. Ibid., 64–72.
75. *IMT*, XXVI, 210, XXXIX, 425–9; *DTB*, 252; Goebbels, *Diaries 1939–1941*, 164–165.
76. *FGM*, 38–9.
77. Facsimile in Michman, 'Why', facing 441.
78. Dan Michman, *The Emergence of Jewish Ghettos During the Holocaust* (Cambridge, 2011), 66–75; quotation from Friedman, *Roads*, 67–8.
79. As seen in the essential reference works. Guy Miron (ed.), *The Yad Vashem Encyclopedia of the Ghettos During the Holocaust*, 2 vols. (Jerusalem, 2009), provides entries for 293 ghettos in the GG (after correction of a handful assigned to the wrong territory). Martin Dean (ed.), *The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Encyclopedia of Camps and Ghettos: Volume II: Ghettos in German-Occupied Eastern Europe: Part A* (Washington, 2012), gives 342. Only 267 are common to both volumes.
80. Młynarczyk, *Judenmord*, 112.
81. In addition to Piotrków: Radomsko and possibly Sulejów (Radom district); Leżajsk, Pruchnik, Sanok and possibly Przeworsk (Kraków); Puławy and

possibly Ostrów (Lublin). This and the following calculations, together with much of the ensuing narrative, based on the 342 entries in Dean, *USHMM Encyclopedia*.

82. Of the 342 identified ghettos, at least 134 (almost 40 per cent) were established in 1942.
83. For the chronology of ghettoization in Warsaw: Barbara Engelking and Jacek Leociak, *The Warsaw Ghetto: A Guide to the Perished City* (New Haven, 2009), 55–76; *FGM*, 102–13; numerous entries in Czerniaków, *Diary*, 87–215; Browning, 'Genocide', 150–2.
84. *DTB*, 165; Andrea Löw and Markus Roth, *Juden in Krakau unter deutscher Besatzung 1939–1945* (Göttingen, 2011), 33–4; Musial, *Zivilverwaltung*, 130; *Baedekers Generalgouvernement*, 112.
85. Chaim A. Kaplan, *Scroll of Agony: The Warsaw Diary of Chaim A. Kaplan*, ed. Abraham I. Katsh (London, 1966), 226.
86. *FGM*, 111; Pohl, *'Judenpolitik'*, 86–7; Aly, *Final Solution*, 137–8.
87. Dean, *USHMM Encyclopedia*, 482–3.
88. Kaplan, *Scroll*, 240, Dean, *USHMM Encyclopedia*, 214–17, 604–9; Musial, *Zivilverwaltung*, 126–45.
89. Quoted in Dean, *USHMM Encyclopedia*, 702.
90. Oscar Pinkus, *The House of Ashes* (London, 1991), 55; Kaplan, *Scroll*, 206–7.

4 'Something big is coming'

1. Klukowski, *Diary*, 138.
2. Ibid., 131–8.
3. Ibid., 141, 143–4, 159–60; Tadeusz Bór-Komorowski, *The Secret Army* (London, 1950), 58.
4. See Adam Tooze, *The Wages of Destruction: The Making and Breaking of the Nazi Economy* (London, 2007), 476–85.
5. Noakes and Pridham, *Nazism: Volume 3*, 324–6.
6. *DTB*, 127–8, 209–10.
7. Rutherford, *Prelude*, 165–9.
8. Aly, *Final Solution*, 124–6.
9. *DTB*, 326–8.
10. Ibid., 332–3, 335–9.
11. Harvey, *Women*, 235, 238–9; Bogdan Musial, 'The origins of "Operation Reinhard": the decision-making process for the mass murder of Jews in the Generalgouvernement', *YVS*, 28 (2000), 120–1.
12. For a clear summary: Czesław Madajczyk, 'Generalplan Ost', *PWA*, 3:2 (1962), 391–441. See also: Czesław Madajczyk (ed.), *Vom Generalplan Ost zum Generalsiedlungsplan* (Munich, 1994); Mechthild Rössler and Sabine Schleiermacher (eds), *Der 'Generalplan Ost': Hauptlinien der nationalsozialistischen Planungs- und Vernichtungspolitik* (Berlin, 1993).
13. *DTB*, 335–6; Musial, 'Origins', 119–20; Rudolf Hoess, *Commandant of Auschwitz: The Autobiography of Rudolf Hoess* (London, 1959), 230–1; Madajczyk, *Zamojszczyzna*, I, 26–7; *DKHH*, 186; Tomasz Kranz,

Extermination of Jews at the Majdanek Concentration Camp (Lublin, 2007), 10.

14. *DTB*, 387; Thomas Sandkühler, *'Endlösung' in Galizien: Der Judenmord in Ostpolen und die Rettungsinitiativen von Berthold Beitz 1941–1944* (Bonn, 1996), 63–7; Aly, *Final Solution*, 190–1.
15. Musial, *Zivilverwaltung*, 21; Dieter Pohl, *Nationalsozialistische Judenverfolgung in Ostgalizien 1941–1944: Organisation und Durchführung eines staatlichen Massenverbrechens* (Munich, 1996), 43–5.
16. For Galicia's history before 1939: Paul Robert Magocsi, *Galicia: A Historical Survey and Bibliographic Guide* (Toronto, 1983); Timothy Snyder, *The Reconstruction of Nations: Poland, Ukraine, Lithuania, Belarus 1569–1999* (New Haven, 2004), 105–53.
17. In addition to the above, see Polonsky, *Politics*, 314–16, 371–5, 458–61.
18. For the evolution of Ukrainian nationalist movements: John A. Armstrong, *Ukrainian Nationalism* (New York, 1963), 18–25, 33–45.
19. Quoted in Andrzej Żbikowski, 'Why did Jews welcome the Soviet Armies?' in Antony Polonsky (ed.), *Polin: Studies in Polish Jewry, Volume 13: Focussing on the Holocaust and its Aftermath* (London, 2000), 68.
20. For the Soviet occupation: Jan Tomasz Gross, *Revolution from Abroad: The Soviet Conquest of Poland's Western Ukraine and Western Belorussia* (Princeton, 2002).
21. Alexandra Zapruder (ed.), *Salvaged Pages: Young Writers' Diaries of the Holocaust* (New Haven, 2002), 311; Lanckorońska, *Those*, 2; Shimon Redlich, *Together and Apart in Brzezany: Poles, Jews, and Ukrainians, 1919–1945* (Bloomington, 2002), 84, 86–7.
22. Grzegorz Hryciuk, 'Victims 1939–1941: The Soviet repressions in eastern Poland', in Elazar Barkan et al. (eds), *Shared History – Divided Memory: Jews and Others in Soviet-Occupied Poland, 1939–1941* (Leipzig, 2007), 173–200; Lanckorońska, *Those*, 31, 23; Zygmunt Sobieski, 'Reminiscences from Lwów, 1939–1946', *Journal of Central European Affairs*, 6:4 (1947), 351; David Engel, 'An early account of Polish Jewry under Nazi and Soviet occupation presented to the Polish government-in-exile, February 1940', *Jewish Social Studies*, 45:1 (1983), 10–11.
23. Armstrong, *Ukrainian Nationalism*, 46–52; *DTB*, 281; Frank Golczewski, 'Shades of gray: reflections on Jewish-Ukrainian and German-Ukrainian relations in Galicia', in Ray Brandon and Wendy Lower (eds), *The Shoah in Ukraine: History, Testimony, Memorialization* (Bloomington, 2008), 126; Chwalba, 'Panorama', 355–6.
24. Armstrong, *Ukrainian Nationalism*, 53–63, 73–5; Gabriel N. Finder and Alexander V. Prusin, 'Collaboration in eastern Galicia: the Ukrainian police and the Holocaust', *East European Jewish Affairs*, 34:2 (2004), 103, 105.
25. Jan Kott, *Still Alive: An Autobiographical Essay* (New Haven, 1994), 51.
26. Sandkühler, *'Endlösung'*, 461; Pohl, *Judenverfolgung*, 54–61; Friedman, *Roads*, 246–8; Hryciuk, 'Victims', 191.
27. Pohl, *Judenverfolgung*, 54–60, 67–71; Sandkühler, *'Endlösung'*, 114–22; Dieter Pohl, 'Hans Krüger and the murder of the Jews in the Stanisławów region (Galicia)', *YVS*, 26 (1998), 241–3; Zygmunt Albert, *Kaźń profesorów*

Lwowskich, Lipiec 1941: Studia oraz relacje i documenty zebrine i opracowane przez Zygmunta Alberta (Wrocław, 1989).

28. Sandkühler, *'Endlösung'*, 66–7. Small portions of Galicia were transferred to the Kraków district.
29. Ibid., 77–9; Pohl, 'Krüger', 242–3; Pohl, *Judenverfolgung*, 85–6, 302.
30. Sandkühler, *'Endlösung'*, 70, 73–6; Golczewski, 'Shades', 134; Mark Mazower, *Hitler's Empire: Nazi Rule in Occupied Europe* (London, 2008), 151–2; Finder and Prusin, 'Collaboration', 101–6; Pohl, *Judenverfolgung*, 83, 92.
31. Quoted in Finder and Prusin, 'Collaboration', 102.
32. Friedman, *Roads*, 183; Sandkühler, *'Endlösung'*, 124.
33. Pohl, 'Krüger', 245; Pohl, *Judenverfolgung*, 43–5; *DTB*, 386–7, 389.
34. *DTB*, 412–13.
35. Ibid., 436, 444; Pohl, *Judenverfolgung*, 154–7; Madajczyk, *Zamojszczyzna*, I, 29.
36. Klukowski, *Diary*, 172–3.
37. Christian Streit, *Keine Kamaraden: Die Wehrmacht und die sowjetischen Kriegsgefangenen 1941–1945* (Bonn, 1991); Pohl, *'Judenpolitik'*, 90–1.
38. Central Commission for Investigation of German Crimes in Poland, *German Crimes in Poland*, I (Warsaw, 1946), 267, 270.
39. Ibid., 266; Szymon Datner, *Crimes Against POWs: Responsibility of the Wehrmacht* (Warsaw, 1964), 228–32.
40. Streit, *Keine Kamaraden*, 134; Central Commission, *German Crimes*, I, 266; Pohl, *'Judenpolitik'*, 91.

5 'The second war'

1. *DTB*, 630–1.
2. Ibid., 186–8.
3. Miłosz, *Native Realm*, 231.
4. For agricultural and food policy: Schwaneberg, 'Exploitation', 167–220; Zygmunt Mańkowski, 'Die Agrarpolitik des Okkupanten im Generalgouvernement, 1939–1945', *Studia Historiae Oeconomicae*, 23 (1998), 255–68.
5. See the table in Schwaneberg, 'Exploitation', 168.
6. Ibid., 183; *DTB*, 548–50.
7. See figures in Schwaneberg, 'Exploitation', 173.
8. Ibid., 183; *DTB*, 201.
9. Roth, *Herrenmenschen*, 157; Schwaneberg, 'Exploitation', 182–3.
10. Chodakiewicz, *Between*, 78, 118; Klukowski, *Diary*, 123; Schwaneberg, 'Exploitation', 183.
11. Schwaneberg, 'Exploitation', 187–94, 197–218; Seidel, *Besatzungspolitik*, 123; *DTB*, 709 (emphasis added).
12. Jan Karski, *Story of a Secret State: My Report to the World* (London, 2011), 270; Kazimierz Wyka, 'The excluded economy', in Janine R. Wedel (ed.), *The Unplanned Society: Poland During and After Communism* (New York, 1992), 25 (emphasis in the original); Szarota, *Warschau unter dem Hakenkreuz:*

Leben und Alltag im besetzten Warschau 1.10.1939 bis 31.7.1944 (Paderborn, 1978), 134; Mary Berg, *The Diary of Mary Berg: Growing Up in the Warsaw Ghetto*, ed. S. L. Shneiderman (Oxford, 2006), 131; Hanson, *Civilian Population*, 26.

13. Karski, *Story*, 274–5; Maria Brzeska, *Through a Woman's Eyes: Life in Poland under the German Occupation* (London, 1944), 83–4; Stefan Korboński, *Fighting Warsaw: The Story of the Polish Underground State 1939–1945* (London, 1956), 219–20.
14. Shatyn, *Private War*, 5–8.
15. Calel Perechodnik, *Am I a Murderer? Testament of a Jewish Ghetto Policeman*, ed. Frank Fox (Boulder, 1996), 8–9; Ringelblum, *Notes*, 86, 136–7; Kaplan, *Scroll*, 225.
16. Berg, *Diary*, 31–2.
17. Michał M. Borwicz (ed.), *Pieśń ujdzie cało ... Antologia wierszy o Żydach pod okupacją niemiecką* (Warsaw, 1947), 115–16.
18. Berg, *Diary*, 64–5; Joseph Kermish (ed.), *To Live with Honor and Die with Honor! ... Selected Documents from the Warsaw Ghetto Underground Archives 'O.S.' ('Oneg Shabbath')* (Jerusalem, 1986), 312; Marian Turski (ed.), *Polish Witnesses to the Shoah* (London, 2010), 89–90; Emanuel Ringelblum, *Polish-Jewish Relations During the Second World War*, ed. Joseph Kermish and Shmuel Krakowski (New York, 1976), 82.
19. Wyka, 'Excluded economy'; Schwaneberg, 'Exploitation', 260–2; Karay, *Death*, 18; Szarota, *Warschau*, 80; Hanson, *Civilian Population*, 24; Seidel, *Besatzungspolitik*, 133; Zapruder, *Salvaged Pages*, 278.
20. Wyka, 'Excluded economy', 33.
21. Quoted in Jan Tomasz Gross, *Polish Society under German Occupation: The Generalgouvernement, 1939–1944* (Princeton, 1979), 110 (variants in numerous sources).
22. Schwaneberg, 'Exploitation', 263, 202; Wyka, 'Excluded economy', 33.
23. *DTB*, 635–9, 416.
24. Szarota, *Warschau*, 81–2; Schwaneberg, 'Exploitation', 212; *DTB*, 590–1 (emphasis added).
25. For labour deportations: Herbert, *Foreign Workers*; Schwaneberg, 'Exploitation', 112–46.
26. Wyka, 'Excluded Economy', 32.
27. Herbert, *Foreign Workers*, especially 69–79, 90–1, 107–31, 265–72.
28. *DTB*, 495, 587.
29. Herbert, *Foreign Workers*, 200.
30. Schwaneberg, 'Exploitation', 135; Gross, *Society*, 80; Kaplan, *Scroll*, 131.
31. Schwaneberg, 'Exploitation', 145–6; Czesław Łuczak, 'Deportations of Polish manpower to Hitler's Reich (1939–1945)', in *Employment-seeking Emigrations of the Poles World-Wide XIX and XX C.* (Kraków, 1975), 177–94; Herbert, *Foreign Workers*, 199.
32. Gross, *Society*, 108–9; Klaus-Peter Friedrich, 'Collaboration in a "land without a quisling": patterns of collaboration with the Nazi German occupation regime in Poland during World War II', *Slavic Review*, 64:4 (2005), 720; Roman Hrabar et al., *The Fate of Polish Children during the Last War* (Warsaw, 1981), 42–3. The most notorious Baudienst site – Liban quarry

in Kraków – was used as a substitute for the neighbouring Płaszów forced labour camp in *Schindler's List*.

33. Chodakiewicz, *Between*, 117; Klukowski, *Diary*, 147.
34. Musial, *Zivilverwaltung*, 166–8; Browning, *Origins*, 149–51; Czerniaków, *Diary*, 233; Huberband, *Kiddush*, 86, 101; *IMT*, XXXVII, 392.
35. Nelken, *And Yet*, 74.
36. For this and the following: Browning, *Origins*, 124–30, 151–67.
37. Ringelblum, *Notes*, 138; *FGM*, 138; Wacław Śledziński, *Governor Frank's Dark Harvest* (Newtown, 1946), 121.
38. For examples of other ghettos: Isaiah Trunk, *Judenrat: The Jewish Councils in Eastern Europe under Nazi Occupation* (New York, 1972), 78.
39. *FGM*, 138.
40. Nelken, *And Yet*, 158, 162–3.
41. Gross, *Society*, 171–7.
42. Szarota, *Warschau*, 48–76.
43. Śledziński, *Dark Harvest*, 32–3; Miłosz, *Native Realm*, 232; Brzeska, *Through*, 32; Ringelblum, *Notes*, 182.
44. Alexander Donat, *The Holocaust Kingdom* (London, 1965); Klukowski, *Diary*, 168–9, 55; Śledziński, *Dark Harvest*, 43–4; Berg, *Diary*, 47.
45. Szpilman, *Pianist*, 13–14; Berg, *Diary*, 81; Szarota, *Warschau*, 164–6; Engelking and Leociak, *Warsaw Ghetto*, 108.
46. Schwaneberg, 'Exploitation', 239–51, 272–6; Pohl, *Judenverfolgung*, 127–30; Wyka, 'Excluded economy', 41.
47. Schwaneberg, 'Exploitation', 100–3; Czesław Łuczak, 'Nazi spatial plans in occupied Poland (1939–1945)', *Studia Historiae Oeconomicae*, 12 (1978), 155.
48. Gross, *Society*, 104–7; Chodakiewicz, *Between*, 106–22; Wyka, 'Excluded economy', 44, 49.
49. Ringelblum, *Notes*, 215; Śledziński, *Dark Harvest*, 187–8; Brzeska, *Through*, 76–7. For reactions to the fur order: Czerniaków, *Diary*, 309–12; Nelken, *And Yet*, 122–4.
50. Szarota, *Warschau*, 154–62; Chwalba, 'Panorama', 350; Łuczak, 'Spatial plans', 156; Brzeska, *Through*, 16; Nelken, *And Yet*, 80.
51. Hanson, *Civilian Population*, 30–2; Ringelblum, *Notes*, 283; Trunk, *Judenrat*, 168–9.
52. Engelking and Leociak, *Warsaw Ghetto*, 280–92; Klukowski, *Diary*, 174; Czerniaków, *Diary*, 275–6; Ringelblum, *Notes*, 196; Berg, *Diary*, 93.
53. Schwaneberg, 'Exploitation', 100, 247–50.
54. Pinkus, *House*, 56; Kermish, *To Live*, 326 (emphasis in original); Berg, *Diary*, 60–1.
55. Ringelblum, *Notes*, 205, 233–4; Kaplan, *Scroll*, 217; Berg, *Diary*, 109; Śledziński, *Dark Harvest*, 187; Szarota, *Warschau*, 103–4.
56. Gross, *Society*, 167–71, 176; Szarota, *Warschau*, 55–6, 100–10; Friedman, *Roads*, 143.
57. Nelken, *And Yet*, 104, 168–9; Ringelblum, *Notes*, 141; Brzeska, *Through*, 48–9.
58. Ringelblum, *Notes*, 188; Szarota, *Warschau*, 105.

59. Klessmann, *Selbstbehauptung*, 78–91; Golczewski, 'Shades', 134; Polish Ministry, *Kultur*, 43–6; Hanson, *Civilian Population*, 37.
60. Trunk, *Judenrat*, 197–206; Czerniaków, *Diary*, 276; Engelking and Leociak, *Warsaw Ghetto*, 354–9.
61. Klessmann, *Selbstbehauptung*, 123–46.
62. Engelking and Leociak, *Warsaw Ghetto*, 344, 347; Tadeusz Pankiewicz, *The Cracow Ghetto Pharmacy* (New York, 1987), 6.
63. Klessmann, *Selbstbehauptung*, 125; Kermish, *To Live*, 476–83; Pinkus, *House*, 39–41.
64. Hanson, *Civilian Population*, 33; Michel Mazor, 'The House Committees in the Warsaw ghetto', in Yehuda Bauer and Nathan Rotenstreich (eds), *The Holocaust as Historical Experience* (New York, 1981), 95–108. Similar institutions existed in Częstochowa and Piotrków: Trunk, *Judenrat*, 347.
65. Gross, *Society*, 100; Trunk, *Judenrat*, 122; Hanson, *Civilian Population*, 33–4; Engelking and Leociak, *Warsaw Ghetto*, 304–11; Nelken, *And Yet*, 92.
66. Szarota, *Warschau*, 144; Lanckorońska, *Those*, passim.
67. Samuel D. Kassow, *Who Will Write Our History? Rediscovering a hidden archive from the Warsaw Ghetto* (London, 2009); Kermish, *To Live*, 66.
68. Lucjan Dobroszycki, 'Studies of the underground press in Poland 1939–1945', *APH*, 7 (1962), 96–102; Śledziński, *Frank's Dark Harvest*, 38–40; Karski, *Story*, 288–95.
69. Karski, *Story*, 295; Dobroszycki, 'Studies', 102; Miłosz, *Native Realm*, 236; Polish Ministry, *Kultur*, 129, 142–5; Szarota, *Warschau*, 201–6; Śledziński, *Dark Harvest*, 33; Ringelblum, *Notes*, 298–301.
70. Engelking and Leociak, *Warsaw Ghetto*, 530–640; Berg, *Diary*, 101–2, 93.
71. Polish Ministry, *Kultur*, 188–206; Michael H. Kater, *Composers of the Nazi Era: Eight Portraits* (Oxford, 2000), 165, 256–7 (368 n. 330 for the poem).
72. Polish Ministry, *Kultur*, 163–73; Lars Jockheck, *Propaganda im Generalgouvernement: Die NS-Besatzungspresse für Deutsche und Polen 1939–1945* (Osnabrück, 2006); Helmut Gauweiler, *Deutsches Vorfeld im Osten: Bildbuch über das Generalgouvernement* (Kraków, 1941) (especially 50–7, 149, 170).
73. Polish Ministry, *Kultur*, 184.
74. Lucjan Dobroszycki, *Reptile Journalism: The Official Polish-Language Press under the Nazis, 1939–1945* (New Haven, 1994); Klaus-Peter Friedrich, 'Die deutsche polnischsprachige Presse im Generalgouvernement (1939–1945): NS-Propaganda für die polnische Bevölkerung', *Publizistik*, 46 (2001), 162–88; Jockheck, *Propaganda*.
75. Polish Ministry, *Kultur*, 184, 187, 193; Szarota, *Warschau*, 74, 185–6; Gross, *Society*, 77.
76. Polish Ministry, *Kultur*, 187, 214–15; Szarota, *Warschau*, 181–4; Agnieszka Haska, 'Discourse of treason in occupied Poland', *EEPS*, 25:3 (2011), 544; Klukowski, *Diary*, 76.
77. Wyka, 'Excluded economy', 29; Miłosz, *Native Realm*, 240; Józef Górski, 'At the turn of history', ed. Jan Grabowski, *HSM*, 1 (2008), 306.
78. Szarota, *Warschau*, 90; Klukowski, *Diary*, 168; Śledziński, *Dark Harvest*, 109.

79. Ibid., 100, 149; Szarota, *Warschau*, 109–10; Ringelblum, *Notes*, 194, 289; Szpilman, *Pianist*, 13;
80. Haska, 'Discourse', 545–6; Klukowski, *Diary*, 125–6, 132.
81. Ibid., 28–30, 201 (and numerous similar entries); John Lowell Armstrong, 'The Polish underground and the Jews: a reassessment of Home Army Commander Tadeusz Bór-Komorowski's Order 116 against banditry', *Slavonic & Eastern European Review*, 72 (1994), 261–4; Shmuel Krakowski, *The War of the Doomed: Jewish Armed Resistance in Poland, 1942–1944* (New York, 1984), 91–5.
82. For 'collaboration', see especially: Friedrich, 'Collaboration', 711–46; Jacek Andrzej Młynarczyk, 'Zwischen Kooperation und Verrat. Zum Problem der Kollaboration im Generalgouvernement 1939–1945', in Jacek Andrzej Młynarczyk (ed.), *Polen unter deutscher und sowjetischer Besatzung 1939–1945* (Osnabrück, 2009), 345–83; Kunicki, 'Collaborators', 203–20.
83. Górski, 'Turn', 303–5.
84. Klukowski, *Diary*, 114.
85. Włodzimierz Borodziej, *Terror und Politik: Die deutsche Polizei und die polnische Widerstandbewegung im Generalgouvernement 1939–1944* (Mainz, 1999), 136–61; Yisrael Gutman, *The Jews of Warsaw, 1939–1945: Ghetto, Underground, Revolt* (Bloomington, 1982), 90–4; numerous entries in Czerniaków, *Diary*, regarding the difficulties caused by Gancwajch; Barbara Engelking, ' "Sehr geehrter Herr Gestapo." Denunziationen im deutsch besetzten Polen 1940/41', in Klaus-Michael Mallmann and Bogdan Musial (eds), *Genesis des Genozids: Polen 1939–1941* (Darmstadt, 2004), 206–20; Klukowski, *Diary*, 110, 253.
86. Haska, 'Discourse', 539–40; Chodakiewicz, *Between*, 109.
87. Chodakiewicz, *Between*, 1.
88. Kunicki, 'Collaborators', 207; Friedrich, 'Collaboration', 733–9; Górski, 'Turn', 303.
89. *IMT*, XII, 11–12; Musial, *Zivilverwaltung*, 87–9; Madajczyk, *Okkupationspolitik*, 152; Shatyn, *Private War*, 9; Kunicki, 'Collaborators', 208; Gross, *Society*, 132–8; Haska, 'Discourse', 536–7; Chodakiewicz, *Between*, 76–85.
90. Gross, *Society*, 140–4; Chodakiewicz, *Between*, 76–85; Friedrich, 'Collaboration', 722–3; Haska, 'Discourse', 537; Klukowski, *Diary*, 129.
91. Trunk, *Judenrat*, passim; Weiss, 'Jewish leadership', 335–65; Ringelblum, *Notes*, 245, 47; Huberband, *Kiddush*, 82.
92. Trunk, *Judenrat*, 475–527; Pankiewicz, *Ghetto Pharmacy*, 33; Perechodnik, *Am I*, 9.
93. Reich-Ranicki, *Author*, 173; Kermish, *To Live*, 135; Trunk, *Judenrat*, 302; Eliyahu Yones, *Smoke in the Sand: The Jews of Lvov in the War Years 1939–1944* (Jerusalem, 2004), 102; Pinkus, *House*, 33.

6 'That accursed year'

1. Czerniaków, *Diary*, 352–3, 363–4, 366, 374, 376–7, 379; Zylberberg, *Diary*, 52–3. The film crew's activities were recorded in all ghetto diaries.

2. Engelking and Leociak, *Warsaw Ghetto*, 328; Ringelblum, *Notes*, 233–4, 287; Kassow, *Who Will*, 260, 268; Czerniaków, *Diary*, 350; Kermish, *To Live*, 484–5.
3. Czerniaków, *Diary*, 356, 364, 382–3; Ringelblum, *Notes*, 275–6; Reich-Ranicki, *Author*, 162–3.
4. Czerniaków, *Diary*, 383–5; Reich-Ranicki, *Author,* 163–5; Engelking and Leociak, *Warsaw Ghetto*, 704–8, 716–17; *FGM*, 313–14.
5. An unknown number were in hiding. Grabitz and Scheffler, *Letzte Spuren*, 177; Gutman, *Jews*, 271.
6. For the evolution of the Holocaust, see especially: Peter Longerich, *Holocaust: The Nazi Murder and Persecution of the Jews* (Oxford, 2010); Browning, *Origins*. For the GG specifically: Dieter Pohl, 'The murder of Jews in the General Government', in Ulrich Herbert (ed.), *National Socialist Extermination Policies: Contemporary German Perspectives and Controversies* (New York, 2000), 83–103; Musial, 'Origins', 113–53.
7. Grabitz and Scheffler, *Letzte Spuren*, 177.
8. For what follows: Longerich, *Holocaust*, 292–6; Pohl, 'Murder', 86–8; Pohl, *'Judenpolitik',* 89–111; Pohl, *Judenverfolgung*, 139–75; Sandkühler, *'Endlösung'*, 137–65.
9. *DTB*, 413–441; Browning, 'Genocide', 157–9.
10. *VOBlGG* (1941), 595; Pohl, *'Judenpolitik'*, 92–5. The decree was officially dated 15 October but issued later, although Frank had authorized such measures for Warsaw on that date.
11. Pohl, 'Krüger', 243–53; Zapruder, *Salvaged Pages*, 315–16; Sandkühler, *'Endlösung'*, 148–65, 461; Pohl, *Judenverfolgung*, 139–54.
12. Ibid., 158–62; Friedman, *Roads*, 262–4; *IMT*, XXXVII, 393.
13. Ibid., 393; Pohl, *Judenverfolgung*, 168–71; Sandkühler, *'Endlösung'*, 142–4.
14. *DKHH*, 233–4; Pohl, *'Judenpolitik'*, 104–6; Musial, *Zivilverwaltung*, 201–8.
15. Yitzhak Arad, *Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka: The Operation Reinhard Death Camps* (Bloomington, 1999), 23–7; *DKHH*, 290. For Bełżec, see also: Robert Kuwałek, *Das Vernichtungslager Bełżec* (Berlin, 2013); Michael Tregenza, 'Bełżec – das vergessene Lager des Holocaust', in Irmtrud Wojak and Peter Hayes (eds), *'Arisierung' im Nationalsozialismus: Volksgemeinschaft, Raub und Gedächtnis* (Frankfurt, 2000), 241–67.
16. For conflicting interpretations: Musial, 'Origins', especially 116–18; Longerich, *Holocaust*, 537–8 n. 100.
17. Pohl, *'Judenpolitik'*, 102–3; *DTB*, 457.
18. Yehoshua Büchler, 'A preparatory document for the Wannsee Conference', *HGS*, 9:1 (1995), 121–9.
19. Housden, *Frank*, 165–168; Eisenblätter, 'Grundlinien', 243–7.
20. Longerich, *Holocaust*, 296; Pohl, *'Judenpolitik'*, 104–5. For a forceful dissenting view: Musial, 'Origins', 143–8.
21. *DTB*, 458.
22. For the Wannsee Protocol: Noakes and Pridham, *Nazism: Volume 3*, 535–41. For analysis of the conference: Longerich, *Holocaust*, 305–10.
23. Kermish, *To Live*, 185–8; Pohl, *'Judenpolitik'*, 113–17.
24. Zapruder, *Salvaged Pages*, 325; Arad, *Belzec*, 383–6; Pohl, *'Judenpolitik'*, 113–23; Pohl, *Judenverfolgung*, 185–203; Sandkühler, *'Endlösung'*, 173–5.

25. *DKHH*, 379–80. Himmler had spent the previous day in Kraków with Frank and Krüger (the latter accompanied him to Lublin): ibid., 378–9.
26. For the following, see especially: Silberklang, 'Willful murder', 190; Pohl, *'Judenpolitik'*, 113–23.
27. Kermish, *To Live*, 186.
28. Joseph Goebbels, *The Goebbels Diaries*, ed. Louis P. Lochner (London, 1948), 102–3; Zapruder, *Salvaged Pages*, 326.
29. Silberklang, 'Willful murder', 195.
30. For an overview of this period: Longerich, *Holocaust*, 330–4.
31. For the history of Sobibór: Arad, *Belzec*; Jules Schelvis, *Sobibor: A History of a Nazi Death Camp*, ed. Bob Moore (Oxford, 2007). Deportations to Bełżec temporarily ceased in late April for reasons which are still not quite clear.
32. Kiełboń, 'Deportationen', 127–32.
33. For the history of Treblinka: Arad, *Belzec*; Jacek Andrzej Młynarczyk, 'Treblinka – eine Todeslager der "Aktion Reinhard" ', *Reinhardt*, 257–81.
34. For this period: Longerich, *Holocaust*, 333–5.
35. *DTB*, 506–13.
36. *DKHH*, 482–3, 491–7; *FGM*, 303; Christopher R. Browning, 'A final Hitler decision for the "Final Solution"? The Riegner telegram reconsidered', *HGS*, 10:1 (1996), 3–10.
37. For an overview of the deportations: Christopher R. Browning, 'Beyond Warsaw and Łódź: perpetrating the Holocaust in Poland', in James S. Pacy and Alan P. Wertheimer (eds), *Perspectives on the Holocaust: Essays in Honor of Raul Hilberg* (Boulder, 1995), 75–90. See also: Arad, *Belzec*, 383–98; the district studies by Musial, Pohl, Sandkühler, Seidel and Młynarczyk; Tatiana Berenstein, 'Eksterminacja ludności żydowskiej w dystrykcie Galicja (1941–1943)', *Biuletyn Żydowskiego Instytutu Historycznego*, 61 (1967), 3–58; Jacek Andrzej Młynarczyk, ' "Akcja Reinhard" w gettach prowincjonalnych dystryktu warszawskiego 1942–1943', in Barbara Engelking et al. (eds), *Prowincja noc: Życie i zagłada Żydów w dystrykcie warszawkim* (Warsaw, 2007), 39–74.
38. *DTB*, 516–17; *FGM*, 446–7; Longerich, *Holocaust*, 341–2; Schwaneberg, 'Exploitation', 157–62.
39. *FGM*, 342–5, 348; Golczewski, 'Polen', 457; Perechodnik, *Am I*, 11.
40. *FGM*, 355; Pohl, 'Murder', 90; Sara Bender, 'The "Reinhardt Action" in the "Bialystok District" ', in Freia Anders et al. (eds), *Bialystok in Bielefeld: Nationalsozialistische Verbrechen vor dem Landgericht Bielefeld, 1958 bis 1967* (Bielefeld, 2001), 186–208; Młynarczyk, 'Treblinka', 280–1; Schelvis, *Sobibor*, 197–220.
41. For an excellent (and, for the time, groundbreaking) overview: Wolfgang Scheffler, 'The forgotten part of the 'Final Solution': the liquidation of the ghettos', *Simon Wiesenthal Center Annual* (1985), 31–52.
42. Robert Kuwałek, 'Die Durchgangsghettos im Distrikt Lublin (u.a. Izbica, Piaski, Rejowiec und Trawniki)', *Reinhardt*, 197–232; Thomas Toivi Blatt, *From the Ashes of Sobibor: A Story of Survival* (Evanston, 1997), 25; Mark Roseman, *A Past in Hiding: Memory and Survival in Nazi Germany* (London, 2000), 218–28.
43. Nelken, *And Yet*, 170–1.

44. Perechodnik, *Am I*, 11–12, 18–20, 32–45; Sara Bender, 'The extermination of the Kielce ghetto – new study and aspects based on survivors' testimonies', *Kwartalnik Historii Żydów*, 2 (2006), 189.
45. Rudolf Reder, 'Bełżec', in Antony Polonsky (ed.), *Polin: Studies in Polish Jewry, Volume 13: Focussing on the Holocaust and its Aftermath* (London, 2000), 271; Arad, *Belzec*, 63–4; Chil Rajchman, *Treblinka: A Survivor's Memory 1942–1943* (London, 2011), 15–16.
46. Miriam Novitch, *Sobibor: Martyrdom and Revolt – Documents and Testimonies* (New York, 1980), 73; Richard Glazar, *Trap with a Green Fence: Survival in Treblinka* (Evanston, 1995), 6.
47. Blatt, *Ashes*, 100–1; Reder, 'Bełżec', 273–4; Arad, *Belzec*, 70, 76–7.
48. Reder, 'Bełżec', 273; Samuel Willenberg, *Surviving Treblinka*, ed. Władysław T. Bartoszewski (Oxford, 1989), 52; Rajchman, *Treblinka*, 20.
49. Rajchman, *Treblinka*, 50, 92.
50. Glazar, *Trap*, 16–17; Reder, 'Bełżec', 280; Jankiel Wiernik, *A Year in Treblinka: An Inmate Who Escaped Tells the Day-To-Day Facts of One Year of His Torturous Experience* (New York, 1944), 30.
51. Arad, *Belzec*, 226–83.
52. Willenberg, *Surviving*, 113; Glazar, *Trap*, 91, 94.
53. Blatt, *Ashes*, 113; Dariusz Libionka, 'The life story of Chaim Hirszman: remembrance of the Holocaust and reflections on postwar Polish-Jewish relations', *YVS*, 34 (2006), 219–47 (Hirszman was murdered in Lublin in 1946 by members of a nationalist gang apparently looking for weapons to steal); Reder, 'Bełżec', 287.
54. Gitta Sereny, *Into That Darkness: From Mercy Killing to Mass Murder* (London, 1985), 157.
55. Wiernik, *Year*, 20; Reder, 'Bełżec', 285; Noakes and Pridham, *Nazism: Volume 3*, 558–62.
56. Schelvis, *Sobibor*, 198; Młynarczyk, 'Treblinka', 280–1.
57. Kranz, *Extermination*.
58. Thomas Sandkühler, 'Das Zwangsarbeitslager Lemberg-Janowska 1941–1944', in Ulrich Herbert et al. (eds), *Die nationalsozialistischen Konzentrationslager: Entwicklung und Struktur*, vol. II (Göttingen, 1998), 606–35; Samuel Drix, *Witness to Annihilation: Surviving the Holocaust. A Memoir* (Washington, 1994), 71.
59. Dieter Pohl, 'Die grossen Zwangsarbeitslager der SS- und Polizeiführer für Juden im Generalgouvernement 1942–1945', in Ulrich Herbert et al. (eds), *Die nationalsozialistischen Konzentrationslager: Entwicklung und Struktur*, vol. I (Göttingen, 1998), 415–38. For specific camps: Karay, *Death*; Christopher R. Browning, *Remembering Survival: Inside a Nazi Slave-Labor Camp* (New York, 2010).
60. Sara Bender, 'Jewish slaves in Kielce, Radom district, September 1942–August 1944', in Michał Galas and Antony Polonsky (eds), *Polin: Studies in Polish Jewry, Volume 23: Jews in Kraków* (Oxford, 2011), 437–63.
61. Michael Thad Allen, *The Business of Genocide: The SS, Slave Labor, and the Concentration Camps* (Chapel Hill, 2002), 246–51.
62. *DTB*, 682.
63. Karay, *Death*, 175–6.

64. Browning, *Ordinary Men*, 53–70.
65. Ibid., 121–32; Browning, ‘ “Judenjagd”: Die Schlußphase der “Endlösung” in Polen’, in Jürgen Matthäus and Klaus-Michael Mallmann (eds), *Deutsche, Juden, Völkermord: Der Holocaust als Geschichte und Gegenwart* (Darmstadt, 2006), 177–89; Jan Grabowski, *Judenjagd: Polowanie na Żydów 1942–1945. Studium dziejów pewnego powiatu* (Warsaw, 2011); Klukowski, *Diary*, 220–6; Seidel, *Besatzungspolitik*, 349.
66. These figures encompass the Galician massacres of late 1941, the ghetto clearances and liquidations, the *Judenjagd*, and the shootings in labour camps (including Majdanek and Janowska) which culminated in the Erntefest of November 1943. Estimates based on: Wolfgang Curilla, *Der Judenmord in Polen und die deutsche Ordnungspolizei 1939–1945* (Paderborn, 2011), 838–45; Sandkühler, *‘Endlösung’*, 459–61; Pohl, *‘Judenpolitik’*, 148–52; Seidel, *Besatzungspolitik*, 329–30, 349; Grabitz and Scheffler, *Letzte Spuren*, 177; Młynarczyk, ‘ “Akcja Reinhard” ’, 74; Klaus-Michael Mallmann, ‘ “Mensch, ich feiere heut’ den tausenden Genickschuß”. Die Sicherheitspolizei und die Shoah in Westgalizien’, *Reinhardt*, 353–79.
67. Marta Woźniak, ‘ “And the earth was still moving ...” Massacre of Jews in Szczeglacin as presented in witnesses’ testimonies’, *HSM*, 2 (2010), 451–64.
68. Michael Zimmermann, *Rassenutopie und Genozid: Die nationalsozialistische ‘Lösung der Zigeunerfrage’* (Hamburg, 1996), 176–84, 278–83; Guenter Lewy, *The Nazi Persecution of the Gypsies* (Oxford, 2000), 67–81; Czerniaków, *Diary*, 346–7; Arad, *Belzec*, 151–3; Pohl, *Judenverfolgung*, 114; Piotr Kaszyca, ‘Die Morde an Sinti und Roma im Generalgouvernement 1939–1945’, in Wacław Długoborski (ed.), *Sinti und Roma im KL Auschwitz-Birkenau 1943–1944: Vor dem Hintergrund ihrer Verfolgung unter der Naziherrschaft* (Oświęcim, 1998), 117–43.
69. Patricia Heberer, ‘Eine Kontinuät der Tötungsoperationen. T4-Täter und die “Aktion Reinhard” ’, *Reinhardt*, 285–308; Peter Black, ‘Foot soldiers of the Final Solution: the Trawniki training camp and Operation Reinhard’, *HGS*, 25:1 (2011), 1–99.
70. Curilla, *Judenmord*; Musial, *Zivilverwaltung*, 248–54; Roth, *Herrenmenschen*, 213–15.
71. Kühne, *Belonging*, 70–1.
72. Roth, *Herrenmenschen*, 206–12.
73. *IMT*, XXXIV, 86–9, XXXVII, 402; *DTB*, 615–16, 796–7, 869.
74. *Baedekers Generalgouvernement*, 137, 103, 134. Astonishingly, Sobibór station, which was almost directly opposite the camp, appeared on the map of the GG in the *second* edition of the guide (published in the summer of 1943), having been absent from the first. This addition cannot easily be explained. I am deeply grateful to Rainer Eisenschmid for drawing my attention to this information.
75. Raul Hilberg (ed.), *Documents of Destruction: Germany and Jewry 1933–1945* (London, 1972), 208–13; Blatt, *Ashes*, 47; Willenberg, *Surviving*, 96.
76. Klukowski, *Diary*, 188–9, 191; ‘The Reports of a Jewish “Informer” in the Warsaw Ghetto – Selected Documents’, intr. Christopher R. Browning and Israel Gutman, *YVS*, 17 (1986), 257; Joseph Kermish, ‘Emmanuel

Ringelblum's Notes hitherto Unpublished', *YVS*, 7 (1968), 178; Kaplan, *Scroll*, 289–90 (Kaplan referred to 'Sobowa').

77. Górski, 'Turn', 306; Glazar, *Trap*, 53; Sereny, *Darkness*, 194. See also Willenberg, *Surviving*, 94.
78. See Bartov, 'Eastern Europe', especially 570–5.
79. Reproduced in Władysław Bartoszewski (ed.), *Tryptyk Polsko-Żydowski* (Warsaw, 2003), 117–39. For its history: Władysław Bartoszewski and Zofia Lewin (eds), *Righteous Among Nations: How Poles Helped the Jews 1939–1945* (London, 1969), lxxvii–lxxix; Kott, *Still Alive*, 74–6.
80. For the English translation: Czesław Miłosz, *New and Collected Poems 1931–2001* (London, 2005), 33–5. Reproduced by permission of Penguin Books Ltd.
81. Turski, *Witnesses*, 28.
82. Sara Bender and Shmuel Krakowski (eds), *The Encyclopedia of the Righteous Among the Nations: Rescuers of Jews during the Holocaust. Poland* (Jerusalem, 2004), 519.
83. For a critical review of the conventional narrative: Dariusz Libionka, 'Polish literature on organized and individual help to the Jews (1945–2008)', *HSM*, 2 (2010), 11–75.
84. Jan Błoński, 'The poor Poles look at the ghetto', in Antony Polonsky (ed.), *My Brother's Keeper? Recent Polish Debates on the Holocaust* (London, 1990), 43. For sensitive analysis of twentieth-century debates: Antony Polonsky, 'Introduction', in Antony Polonsky (ed.), *Polin: Studies in Polish Jewry, Volume 13: Focussing on the Holocaust and its Aftermath* (London, 2000), 3–33.
85. For an introduction to this research: Jan Tomasz Gross (with Irena Grudzińska Gross), *Golden Harvest: Events at the Periphery of the Holocaust* (Oxford, 2012).
86. Finder and Prusin, 'Collaboration', especially 106–8; Friedrich, 'Collaboration', 723–4; Klukowski, *Diary*, 222 (also 209, 219–20, 223).
87. John J. Hartman and Jacek Krochmal (eds), *I Remember Every Day ... The Fates of the Jews of Przemyśl during World War II* (Przemyśl, 2002), 205; Friedrich, 'Collaboration', 721–2; Grabowski, *Jugenjagd*, 121–7.
88. Klukowski, *Diary*, 220–1; Kermish, *To Live*, 213; Grabowski, *Jugenjagd*, 69.
89. Barbara Engelking, 'Murdering and denouncing Jews in the Polish countryside, 1942–1945', *EEPS*, 25:3 (2011), 433–56; Andrzej Żbikowski, ' "Night Guard": Holocaust mechanisms in the Polish rural areas, 1942–1945. Preliminary introduction into research', *EEPS*, 25:3 (2011), 512–29; Alina Skibińska and Jakub Petelewicz, 'The participation of Poles in crimes against Jews in the Swiętokrzyskie region', *YVS,* 35:1 (2007), 5–48; Alina Skibińska, 'Perpetrators' self-portrait: the accused village administrators, commune heads, fire chiefs, forest rangers, and gamekeepers', *EEPS*, 25:3 (2011), 457–85; Klukowski, *Diary*, 221.
90. Engelking, 'Murdering', 441; Skibińska, 'Self-portrait', 473; Borwicz, *Pieśń*, 91; Agnieszka Haska, ' "I knew only one Jewess in hiding ..." Zofia and Marian Chocim's Case', *HSM*, 2 (2010), 312–27; Kott, *Still Alive*, 55–6.
91. Jan Grabowski, *Rescue for Money: Paid Helpers in Poland, 1939–1945* (Jerusalem, 2008), 19; Perechodnik, *Am I*, 57, 90. See also Marcin Zaremba,

'*Szaber* Frenzy', *HSM*, 2 (2010), 181, for the *Biuletyn Informacyjny* report on looting in Otwock.

92. Ringelblum, *Polish-Jewish Relations*, 123–6; Gunnar S. Paulsson, *Secret City: The Hidden Jews of Warsaw 1940–1945* (New Haven, 2002), 148–52; Jan Grabowski et al. (eds), 'The diary of Hinda and Chanina Malachi', *HSM*, 1 (2008), 209–34 (224 for the quotation).
93. Ringelblum, *Polish-Jewish Relations*, 100–4; Paulsson, *Secret City*, 99–109.
94. Grabowski, *Rescue*, 7–14; Ringelblum, *Polish-Jewish Relations*, 226; Pinkus, *House*, 149.
95. Górski, 'Turn', 306; Grabowski, *Rescue*, 31–3; Pinkus, *House*, 185; Leon Weliczker Wells, *The Janowska Road* (London, 1966), 231.
96. Krystyna Chiger (with Daniel Paisner), *The Girl in the Green Sweater: A Life in the Holocaust's Shadow* (New York, 2008), 201, 104; Wells, *Janowska*, 230; Hartman and Krochmal, *I Remember*, 63; Blatt, *Ashes*, 163.
97. Paulsson, *Secret City*, 57, 221.
98. For the first view: Bartoszewski and Lewin, *Righteous*, lxxx. For the second: Libionka, 'Polish Literature', 66–7; Nechama Tec, *When Light Pierced the Darkness: Christian Rescue of Jews in Nazi-Occupied Poland* (Oxford, 1986), 84.
99. Ringelblum, *Polish-Jewish Relations*, especially 7–9, 136; Gross, *Golden Harvest*, 64–7.
100. Bartoszewski and Lewin, *Righteous*, xliv–liii, lxxix–lxxx, 41–62, 665–6, 670; Stefan Korboński, *The Polish Underground State: A Guide to the Underground, 1939–1945* (Boulder, 1978), 125–6 (Korboński was head of the Directorate).
101. Libionka, 'Polish Literature', 60; Polonsky, 'Introduction', 25–6; Haska, 'Discourse', 542–3.
102. Aleksandra Bańkowska, 'Polish Partisan formations during 1942–1944 in Jewish testimonies', *HSM*, 1 (2008), 103–22. For the NSZ: Korboński, *Underground State*, 104–9.
103. *Naród* quoted in Polonsky, 'Introduction', 22; Górski, 'Turn', 308–9.
104. Huberband, *Kiddush*, 96; Friedman, *Roads*, 191.
105. Dariusz Libionka, 'Polish Church hierarchy and the Holocaust – an essay from a critical perspective', *HSM*, 2 (2010), 76–127; Donald L. Niewyk (ed.), *Fresh Wounds: Early Narratives of Holocaust Survival* (Chapel Hill, 1998), 157–9.
106. Żbikowski, ' "Night Guard" ', 513; Paulsson, *Secret City*, 129; Libionka, 'Polish literature', 62; Kassow, *Who Will*, 383–5.
107. Żbikowski, ' "Night Guard" ', 526.
108. Donat, *Holocaust Kingdom*, 230; Wells, *Janowska*, 239.
109. Friedrich. 'Collaboration', 728–31; Perechodnik, *Am I*, 97–9; Ringelblum, *Polish-Jewish Relations*, 256–7.
110. A point repeatedly stressed by Gross, *Golden Harvest*, yet apparently lost on the book's conservative critics.
111. Perechodnik, *Am I*, 86, 91, 100, 132, 137.
112. Reprinted (in Polish and English) in Tec, *When Light*, 110–12. See also Jan Błoński, 'Polish-Catholics and Catholic Poles: the Gospel, national interest,

civic solidarity, and the destruction of the Warsaw ghetto', *YVS*, 25 (1996), 181–96.
113. Zuzanna Schnepf-Kołarcz, ' "In the Ciechania Presbytery." The story of saving Zofia Trembska. A case study', *HSM*, 2 (2010), 363–82.
114. Hartman and Krochmal, *I Remember*, 237–40.
115. Housden, *Frank*, 169–73.
116. *DTB*, 531–3; Engelking and Leociak, *Warsaw Ghetto*, 714–15.

7 'The crying of the children'

1. Unless otherwise indicated, Czesława's meagre biography is taken from Franciszek Piper and Irena Strzelecka (eds), *Księga Pamięci: Transporty Polaków do KL Auschwitz z Lublina i innych miejscowości Lubelszczyzny 1940–1944*, III (Oświęcim, 2009), 1392–3.
2. Madajczyk, *Zamojszczyzna*, I, 220–2; Czech, *Chronicle*, 684–5.
3. Fergal Keane, 'Returning to Auschwitz: photographs from hell', *Mail on Sunday*, 7 April 2007.
4. Czech, *Chronicle*, 351.
5. The best overview of the Aktion is Czesław Madajczyk, 'Deportations in the Zamość region 1942 and 1943 in the light of German documents', *APH*, 1 (1958), 75–106. See also Bruno Wasser, *Himmlers Raumplanung im Osten: Der Generalplan Ost in Polen 1940–1944* (Basel, 1993).
6. Ibid., 133–4; Musial, 'Origins', 148–9; Madajczyk, *Zamojszczyzna*, I, 35; Klukowski, *Diary*, 176.
7. Madajczyk, *Zamojszczyzna*, I, 29, 66–7; *DTB*, 473.
8. See Longerich, *Himmler*, 578–83.
9. For the evolution of SS plans between July and November 1942: Madajczyk, 'Deportations', 78–84.
10. *DKHH*, 493, 495–6; *DTB*, 504–5, 536–42, 551–2.
11. Madajczyk, *Zamojszczyzna*, I, 141–4, 167–8.
12. Hrabar et al., *Fate*, 51; Wasser, *Raumplanung*, 139–41; Madajczyk, *Zamojszczyzna*, I, 257; Klukowski, *Diary*, 231.
13. Central Commission, *German Crimes*, II, 80.
14. Madajczyk, *Zamojszczyzna*, I, 152–3, 175–6, 256–9; Central Commission, *German Crimes*, II, 80.
15. Gumkowski and Leszczyński, *Poland*, 154; Central Commission, *German Crimes*, II, 82.
16. Madajczyk, *Zamojszczyzna*, I, 358, 380–3, 444–8.
17. Ibid., 380–381; Landau, *Kronika*, II, 93; Kirył Sosnowski, *The Tragedy of Children under Nazi Rule* (Poznań, 1962), 64–5.
18. Piper and Strzelecka, *Księga*, II, 1045–62, III, 1387–1400; Madajczyk, *Zamojszczyzna*, I, 220–2 (221 for Aumeier).
19. Gumkowski and Leszczyński, *Poland*, 157; Piper and Strzelecka, *Księga*, II, 1045–62, 1076–8, 1149–65, III, 1387–400, 1423–5, 1469–85.
20. *DTB*, 603; Madajczyk, *Zamojszczyzna*, I, 210–12. Courageous though Hagen's stand against the rumoured murder of Poles was, he made no protest against the actual murder of Jews.

21. Klukowski, *Diary*, 229, 236.
22. Madajczyk, *Zamojszczyzna*, I, 278–82; Klukowski, *Diary*, 230–1; Madajczyk, 'Deportations', 86 n. 45.
23. Madajczyk, *Zamojszczyzna*, I, 415–21, 381–2; *DTB*, 620.
24. Eisenblätter, 'Grundlinien', 279–93; Goebbels, *Diaries*, ed. Lochner, 275, 307, 313–14.
25. Madajczyk, *Zamojszczyzna*, I, 497–503, 455–6, 459–60; Madajczyk, 'Deportations' (especially 106); Klukowski, *Diary*, 253–354.
26. Madajczyk, 'Deportations', 98–100; Gumkowski and Leszczyński, *Poland*, 161–2.
27. Klukowski, *Diary*, 264–75.
28. Ibid., 258–9, 280, 286–7; Harvey, *Women*, 265–8; Madajczyk, *Zamojszczyzna*, II, 211.
29. Hrabar et al., *Fate*, 131–2; *IMT*, XXIX, 123 (145 for the Holocaust). See also Longerich, *Himmler*, 595–600.
30. Klukowski, *Diary*, 243; Hrabar et al., *Fate*, 133–4.
31. Madajczyk, *Zamojszczyzna*, II, 61–6, 95–7; *IMT*, XXVI, 14–37; Sandkühler, *'Endlösung'*, 94–6.
32. Pohl, *'Judenpolitik'*, 157; *IMT*, XXXIV, 70.
33. Dobroszycki, *Reptile Journalism*, 129–34; Korboński, *Underground State*, 144–7; *IMT*, XXVI, 14–37 (especially, 23–5, 28–36).
34. *DTB*, 772; *IMT*, XXVI, 20–1.
35. *VOBlGG* (1943), 589–90.
36. Klukowski, *Diary*, 259.
37. Wolf-Dietrich Heike, *The Ukrainian Division 'Galicia', 1943–45: A Memoir* (Toronto, 1988), 138–42; Armstrong, *Ukrainian Nationalism*, 166–75.
38. Snyder, *Reconstruction*, 165–7; Christoph Mick, *Kriegserfahrungen in einer multiethnischen Stadt: Lemberg 1914–1947* (Wiesbaden, 2011), 524–8.
39. Armstrong, *Ukrainian Nationalism*, 142–56; Snyder, *Reconstruction*, 162–4, 168–72; Grzegorz Motyka, 'Der polnische-ukrainische Gegensatz in Wolhynien und Ostgalizien', in Bernhard Chiari (ed.), *Die polnische Heimatarmee: Geschichte und Mythos der Armia Krajowa seit dem Zweiten Weltkrieg* (Munich, 2003), 541.
40. Motyka, 'Gegensatz', 542–4; Snyder, *Reconstruction*, 176–7; Mick, *Kriegserfahrungen*, 528–35; Redlich, *Together*, 131; Drix, *Witness*, 201, 209–10; Pohl, *Judenverfolgung*, 376; Sandkühler, *'Endlösung'*, 107.
41. For the Lublin district: Motyka, 'Gegensatz', 543; Snyder, *Reconstruction*, 176–7.
42. Madajczyk, 'Deportations', especially 83, 99.
43. E.g. Madajczyk, *Zamojszczyzna*, II, 249–51.
44. Klukowski, *Diary*, 286, 316–17; Waldemar Lotnik, *Nine Lives: Ethnic Conflict in the Polish-Ukrainian Borderlands* (London, 1999), 59, 65–6.
45. Lotnik, *Nine Lives*, 31; Motyka, 'Gegensatz', 544.

8 'The blood of fighting Poland'

1. See Martyn Housden, ‘Security policing: a “successful” investigation from the Government General’, *German History*, 14 (1996), 209–16, although with a less than secure grasp of the Polish underground (209 for Krüger’s account).
2. Korboński, *Underground State*, 85–6.
3. Bartoszewski, *Death Ring*, 195–292, 357–9; Landau, *Kronika*, III (1963), 311–12, 315; Central Commission, *German Crimes*, I, 180–2.
4. *IMT*, XXIX, 678; *DTB*, 773, 777–8, 781, 884; Bartoszewski, *Death Ring*, 279–91.
5. For overviews of the underground: Korboński, *Underground State*; Józef Garliński, ‘The Polish underground state’, *Journal of Contemporary History*, 10:2 (1975), 219–59.
6. Korboński, *Underground State*, 15–25.
7. Ibid., 22–7.
8. Korboński, *Fighting Warsaw*, 14.
9. Śledziński, *Dark Harvest*, 61; see also Lanckorońska, *Those*, 45.
10. Korboński, *Underground State*, 63–5; Bór-Komorowski, *Secret Army*, 71–3.
11. Garliński, ‘Underground state’, 231–2; Korboński, *Underground State*, 104–16.
12. For the political arms of the underground: ibid., 26–55.
13. Karski, *Story*, 143; Włodzimierz Borodziej, *The Warsaw Uprising of 1944* (Madison, 2006), 21.
14. Reprinted in Marek Ney-Krwawicz, *The Polish Resistance Home Army 1939–1945* (London, 2001), 164.
15. Bór-Komorowski, *Secret Army*, 43.
16. Ibid, 78–80; Korboński, *Underground State*, 92–5; Karski, *Story*, 235.
17. Polish Ministry, *Kultur*, 196–7; Korboński, *Underground State*, 71–82, 142; Haska, ‘Discourse’, 530–52; Bór-Komorowski, *Secret Army*, 83–4; Karski, *Story*, 327–8.
18. Krakowski, *War*, 5–6.
19. Ringelblum, *Notes*, 310; Perechodnik, *Am I*, 43, 81–2, 243 n. 146.
20. Ringelblum, *Notes*, 329; Ringelblum, *Polish-Jewish Relations*, 160; Pankiewicz, *Ghetto Pharmacy*, 61, 114–15; Lotnik, *Nine Lives*, 27–8.
21. Klukowski, *Diary*, 265, 268–9.
22. Lotnik, *Nine Lives*, 27; Ringelblum, *Notes*, 269; Engelking and Leociak, *Warsaw Ghetto*, 683–5; Krakowski, *War*, 218; Seidel, *Besatzungspolitik*, 197.
23. Ringelblum, *Polish-Jewish Relations*, 164; Gutman, *Jews*, 228–49, 285–303, 307–23; Yitzhak Zuckerman, *A Surplus of Memory: Chronicle of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising*, ed. Barbara Harshav (Berkeley, 1993), 279.
24. Aktionen frequently coincided with Jewish religious festivals.
25. Gutman, *Jews*, 364–400; Engelking and Leociak, *Warsaw Ghetto*, 775–800. For the daily reports from the German commander: Jürgen Stroop, *The Stroop Report: The Jewish Quarter in Warsaw Is No More*, ed. Sybil Milton (London, 1980).
26. For estimates of the casualties on both sides: Gutman, *Jews*, 392–5, rejecting Stroop’s figures.
27. In Zuckerman, *Surplus*, 357.

28. For sensitive approaches: Joshua D. Zimmerman, 'The attitude of the Polish Home Army (AK) to the Jewish question during the Holocaust: the case of the Warsaw ghetto uprising', in Murray Baumgarten et al. (eds), *Varieties of Antisemitism: History, Ideology, Discourse* (Newark, 2009), 105–26; Frank Golczewski, 'Die Heimatarmee und die Juden', in Bernhard Chiari (ed.), *Die polnische Heimatarmee: Geschichte und Mythos der Armia Krajowa seit dem Zweiten Weltkrieg* (Munich, 2003), 635–76.
29. Bartoszewski and Lewin, *Righteous*, liv–lxiii, 555–71, 672–3, 701; Zimmerman, 'Attitude', 113, 119; Bór-Komorowski, *Secret Army*, 103.
30. *IMT*, XXXVII, 410; Krakowski, *War*, 218–28.
31. For Jewish partisans: ibid., 3–160.
32. Gruber, *I Chose*, 55; Krakowski, *War*, 25–59.
33. Ibid., 249–71.
34. Arad, *Belzec*, 258–341, 363–4; Blatt, *Ashes*, 153.
35. Browning, *Ordinary Men*, 133–42; Andrzej Żbikowski, 'Texts buried in oblivion: testimonies of two refugees from the mass grave at Poniatowa', *HSM*, 1 (2008), 90.
36. Pohl, 'Zwangsarbeitslager', 428–9; Turski, *Witnesses*, 197–8; Wells, *Janowska*, 214–19.
37. Klukowski, *Diary*, 261; Korboński, *Underground State*, 89–92; Krakowski, *War*, 5–9; Bór-Komorowski, *Secret Army*, 112; Lotnik, *Nine Lives*, 55.
38. Shatyn, *Private War*, 267; Klukowski, *Diary*, 225, 252–3; Lotnik, *Nine Lives*, 58; Chodakiewicz, *Between*, 195–9; Krakowski, *War*, 13–16.
39. Klukowski, *Diary*, 227; Gruber, *I Chose*, 52; Armstrong, 'Polish underground', 259–76 (263 for Czeberaki); Bór-Komorowski, *Secret Army*, 172; Krakowski, *War*, 14–16.
40. Klukowski, *Diary*, 305; Lotnik, *Nine Lives*, 22; Janusz Marszalec, 'Leben unter dem Terror der Besatzer und das Randverhalten von Soldaten der Armia Krajowa', in Bernhard Chiari (ed.), *Die polnische Heimatarmee: Geschichte und Mythos der Armia Krajowa seit dem Zweiten Weltkrieg* (Munich, 2003), 325–54.
41. For this and other examples of sabotage: Ney-Krwawicz, *Polish Resistance*, 48–51; Korboński, *Underground State*, 83–9.
42. Klukowski, *Diary*, 257, 274.
43. Eisenblätter, 'Grundlinien', 272–3; Longerich, *Himmler*, 658; Landau, *Kronika*, II, 122; *DTB*, 598–612; Klukowski, *Diary*, 245–6.
44. Garliński, 'Underground state', 234, 243; Bór-Komorowski, *Secret Army*, 139–42; Longerich, *Himmler*, 658–9; Krakowski, *War*, 40–1.
45. E.g. in Zamość and Radom: Klukowski, *Diary*, 289, 291; Dobroszycki and Getter, 'Gestapo', 111.
46. Ibid., 106; Chodakiewicz, *Between*, 194; Borodziej, *Terror*, 132, 256–8.
47. For the evolution of AK strategy: Borodziej, *Uprising*, 38–48; Jan M. Ciechanowski, *The Warsaw Rising of 1944* (Cambridge, 1974), 149–89; Bór-Komorowski, *Secret Army*, 173–7.
48. Korboński, *Underground State*, 98–9.
49. Borodziej, *Uprising*, 55–60; Bór-Komorowski, *Secret Army*, 193–8; Korboński, *Underground State*, 113.

50. Ciechanowski, *Rising*, 212–24, 243–80; Bór-Komorowski, *Secret Army*, 199–213; Korboński, *Fighting Warsaw*, 347.
51. Bór-Komorowski, *Secret Army*, 205–15; Ciechanowski, *Rising*, 224–42; Borodziej, *Uprising*, 61–72.
52. Bór-Komorowski, *Secret Army*, 216. Fighting had in fact already begun in a number of locations. For the course of the uprising, see especially Borodziej, *Uprising*, 74–128.
53. Central Commission, *German Crimes*, I, 200–5.
54. Quoted in Hanson, *Civilian Population*, 77.
55. Ibid., passim, for civilian experiences and attitudes.
56. Borodziej, *Uprising*, 87–94.
57. Ibid., 114–28; Bór-Komorowski, *Secret Army*, 338–70.
58. Borodziej, *Uprising*, 130, 140; Hanson, *Civilian Population*, 202.
59. Willenberg, *Surviving*, 189–92; Borodziej, *Uprising*, 141–2; Szpilman, *Pianist*, 186.
60. Miłosz, *Native Realm*, 248; Borodziej, *Uprising*, 148; Eugeniusz Duraczyński, 'The Warsaw Rising: research and disputes continue', *APH*, 75 (1997), 190–1.
61. Garliński, 'Underground state', 253; Korboński, *Fighting Warsaw*, 30.

9 'Herr Roosevelt's list'

1. *DTB*, 937; Shatyn, *Private War*, 270.
2. *DTB*, 938; *NCA*, VI, 740–5.
3. *DTB*, 938–44; Schenk, *Frank*, 363–70.
4. Klukowski, *Diary*, 297, 347.
5. Eisenblätter, 'Grundlinien', 369–86; *IMT*, XXIX, 723; *DTB*, 917, 921–2.
6. *IMT*, XXIX, 723; Dobroszycki and Getter, 'Gestapo', 115–17; Borodziej, *Terror*, 253.
7. Pohl, *'Judenpolitik'*, 174–5; Pohl, 'Zwangsarbeitslager', 429–30; Karay, *Death*, 72–3; Browning, *Remembering*, 207–45; Seidel, *Besatzungspolitik*, 369–70.
8. Klukowski, *Diary*, 344–6; Shmuel Spector, 'Aktion 1005: effacing the murder of millions', *HGS*, 5:2 (1990), 157–73; Wells, *Janowska*, 171, 196–7.
9. Spector, 'Aktion 1005', 168–9; Pohl, *'Judenpolitik'*, 175–6.
10. Arad, *Belzec*, 371–5; Gross, *Golden Harvest*, 20–6; Daniel Blatman, 'The encounter between Jews and Poles in the Lublin district after liberation, 1944–1945', *EEPS*, 20:4 (2006), 618.
11. Zaremba, '*Szaber* frenzy', 183–8; Klukowski, *Red Shadow*, 33.
12. Blatman, 'Encounter', 610–61; Klukowski, *Red Shadow*, 33–4.
13. Klukowski, *Red Shadow*, 13, 33–4, 39; Lotnik, *Nine Lives*, 165–6.
14. Libionka, 'Life Story', 229–30; Blatman, 'Encounter', 611; Klukowski, *Red Shadow*, 5–45.
15. Korboński, *Underground State*, 204–12.
16. Ibid., 213–37.
17. *IMT*, XII, 8, 13.
18. Ibid., 14, 35–41.

19. *DTB*, 611–12.
20. For a useful summary of the fate of the most important personnel, see Schenk, *Frank*, 421–7, the principal source for this and the following paragraph unless otherwise indicated.
21. Roth, *Herrenmenschen*, 469–70, for Ehaus.
22. Sandkühler, *'Endlösung'*, 426–9; Pohl, *Judenverfolgung*, 388.
23. Richard Breitman, 'Report on the IRR file of Hermann Julius Hoefle' (http://www.archives.gov/iwg/research-papers/hoefle-irr-file.html).
24. Roth, *Herrenmenschen*, 388–425; Musial, *Zivilverwaltung*, 361–7; Schenk, *Frank*, 421.
25. Roth, *Herrenmenschen*, 344–57, 361–2, 416–25; Musial, *Zivilverwaltung*, 367–74; N. Frank, *Shadow*, 335–55.
26. Dick de Mildt, *In The Name of the People: Perpetrators of Genocide in the Reflection of Their Post-War Prosecution in West Germany: The 'Euthanasia' and 'Aktion Reinhard' Trial Cases* (The Hague, 1996).
27. Korboński, *Fighting Warsaw*, 495.
28. N. Frank, *Shadow*, 332.
29. Klukowski, *Red Shadow*, 72.

Epilogue

1. Klukowski, *Red Shadow*, 113.
2. *Baedekers Generalgouvernement*, 87–9.
3. Miłosz, *Native Realm*, 229.
4. David Engel, 'Patterns of anti-Jewish violence in Poland, 1944–46', *YVS*, 26 (1998), 43–85; Jan Tomasz Gross, *Fear: Anti-Semitism in Poland after Auschwitz. An Essay in Historical Interpretation* (Princeton, 2006); Adam Kopciowski, 'Anti-Jewish incidents in the Lublin region in the early years after World War II', *HSM*, 1 (2008), 177–205 (187 for Fajga).
5. The number of ethnic Polish victims, for both the GG and Poland as a whole, remains uncertain. The official postwar investigation (republished, for contemporary diplomatic reasons, as Mariusz Muszyński (ed.), *Sprawozdanie w przedmiocie strat i szkód woyennych Polski w latach 1939–1945* (Warsaw, 2007)) estimated that around 3 million ethnic Poles died as a result of the German invasion and occupation, a figure which served an important political purpose by implying an equality of victimhood with the 3 million Polish Jews who died in the Holocaust. Although deeply embedded in popular consciousness, no historians now believe it to be correct although estimates vary widely. For a provocative overview: Klaus-Peter Friedrich, 'Erinnerungspolitische Legitimierungen des Opferstatus: Zur Instrumentalisierung fragwürdiger Opferzahlen in Geschichtsbildern vom Zweiten Weltkrieg in Polen und Deutschland', in Dieter Bingen et al. (eds), *Die Destruktion des Dialogs: Zur innenpolitischen Instrumentalisierung negativer Fremd- und Feinbilder. Polen, Tseichien, Deutschland und die Niederlande im Vergleich, 1900–2005* (Wiesbaden, 2007), 176–91. For the GG specifically, it is reasonable to assume that the suppression of the Warsaw Uprising, the Zamość Aktion, the continual terror campaigns and

general deprivation cost the lives of at least 300,000. Tens of thousands more died in Auschwitz or camps in the Reich proper.

6. See Snyder, *Reconstruction*, 179–210.
7. For sensitive treatments of two aspects of the debates: Michael C. Steinlauf, *Bondage to the Dead: Poland and the Memory of the Holocaust* (Syracuse, 1997); John-Paul Himka, *Ukrainians, Jews and the Holocaust: Divergent Memories* (Saskatoon, 2009).
8. See Benjamin Frommer, 'Postscript: the Holocaust in occupied Poland, then and now', *EEPS*, 25:3 (2011), 575–80, for one example.
9. For many other examples, see Omer Bartov, *Erased: Vanishing Traces of Jewish Galicia in Present-Day Ukraine* (Princeton, 2007).
10. Kassow, *Who Will*, 1–5.
11. Kermish (ed.), *To Live*, 58–9.

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1 Rivals in crime: Heinrich Himmler and Hans Frank.

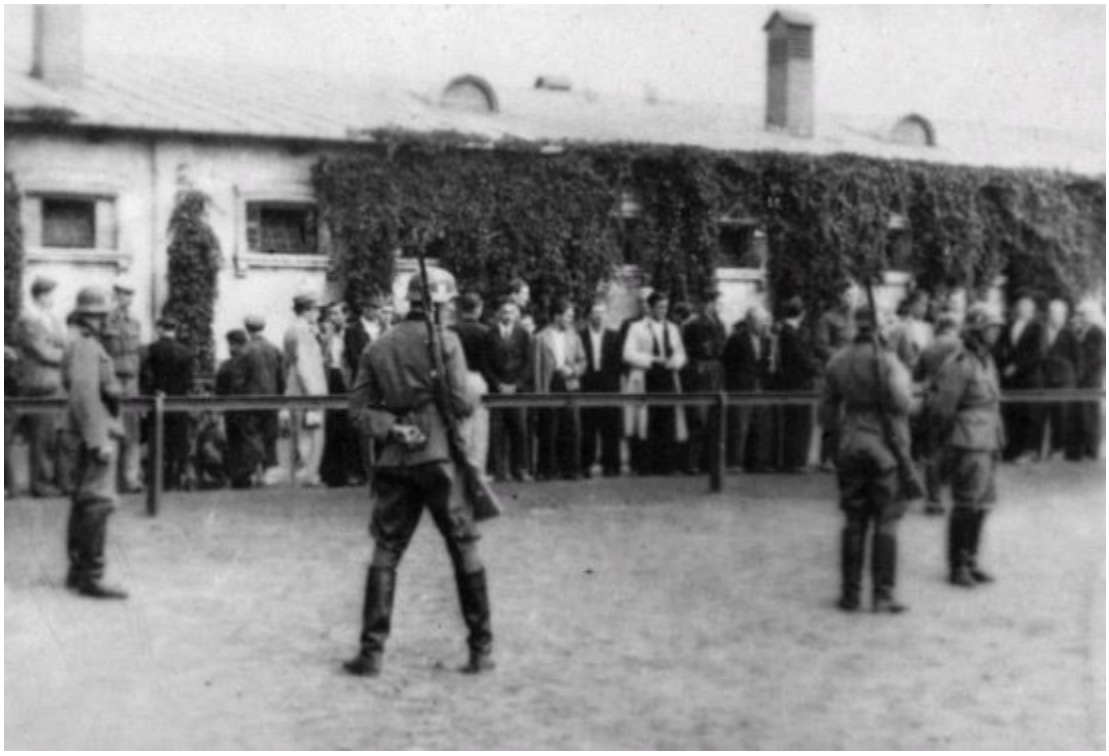
2 Odilo Globocnik.

3 Women are led to their execution at Palmiry.

4 Kraków’s Jews are forced into the ghetto, March 1941.

5 Ukrainian nationalists greet Frank in Lwów, August 1941.

6 Soviet prisoners of war in the Dęblin camp.



7 German troops in Warsaw guard Poles seized for labour deportation to the Reich.

8 A street in the Warsaw ghetto.

9 Making Kraków ‘free of Jews’: a deportation train, probably to Bełżec.

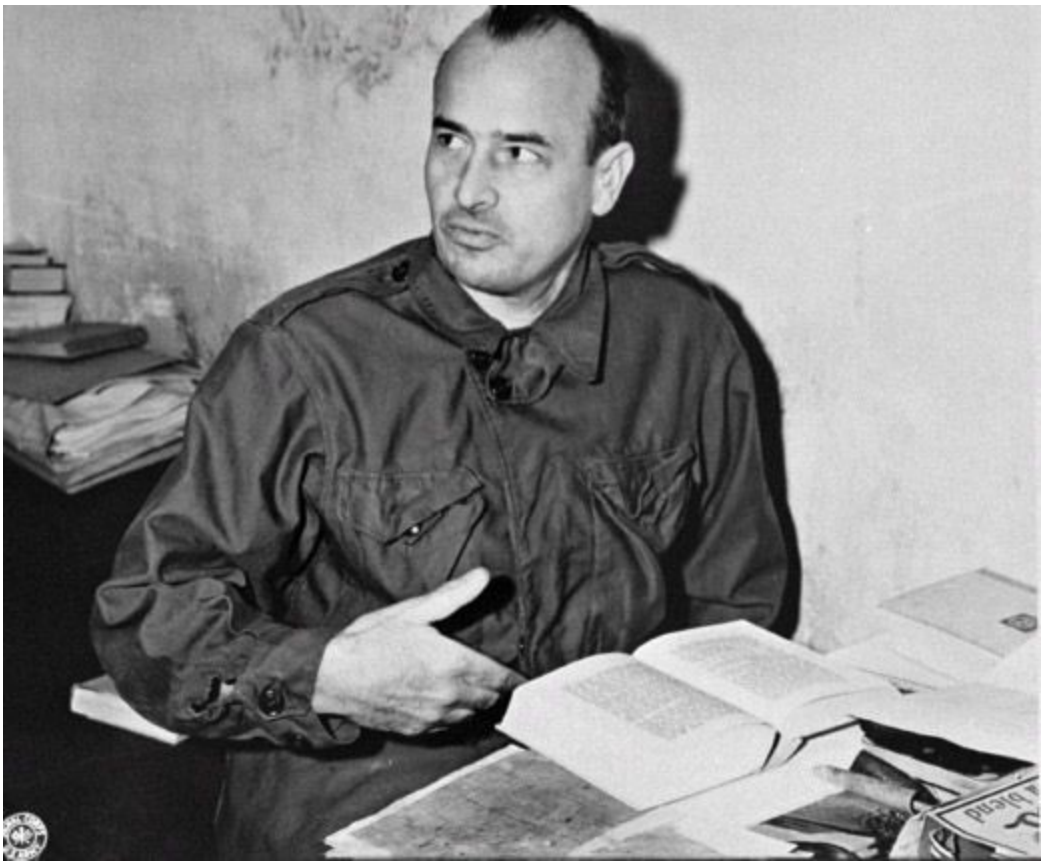
10 Płaszów forced labour camp.

11 ‘Such a beautiful young girl, so innocent’: Czesława Kwoka.

12 Children are separated from their parents during the ZamosZamość Aktion.

13 An underground bunker is discovered during the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising.

14 Home Army troops with a captured German tank during the Warsaw Uprising.



15 Frank in his cell at Nuremberg.

16 Warsaw in 1945. The area of the ghetto is in the foreground.

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